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AUBREY F. G. BELL



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TO THE MEMORY OF HENRY BUTLER CLARKE (1863-1904) AND
JAMES FITZMAURICE-KELLY (1858-1923)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	13
I. THE NOVEL	39
§ i. The Regionalist Novel: Pereda	39
§ ii. Valera and the Classical Idealist Novel	44
§ iii. Pedro Antonio de Alarcón	49
§ iv. The National Novel: Pérez Galdós	52
§ v. The Realist and Naturalist Schools (Emilia Pardo Bazán, Palacio Valdés, Alas, Coloma, Picón, Mathcu, Blasco Ibáñez, Trigo)	61
§ vi. The Short Story	103
§ vii. The Historical Novel	105
§ viii. Baroja and the Social Novel	107
§ ix. The Classical Novel: Ricardo León	120
§ x. The Lyric Novel: Valle-Inclán	126
§ xi. Ramón Pérez de Ayala and the Psychological Novel	135
§ xii. The Symbolist Novel: Gabriel Miró (Concha Espina)	140
II. THE DRAMA	151
§ i. The Drama in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century: Echegaray	151
§ ii. The Drama and Social Problems: Galdós and Dicenta	154
§ iii. The <i>Género Chico</i>	156
§ iv. The Modernist Novel: Benavente	160
§ v. Gregorio Martínez Sierra	171
§ vi. Linares Rivas	178
§ vii. The Brothers Alvarez Quintero	180
§ viii. The Poetical Drama	184
§ ix. New Tendencies	187
III. LYRIC POETRY	193
§ i. The Forerunners of Modernism	193
§ ii. Campoamor and Núñez de Arce	195
§ iii. The Modernist Invasion (Rubén Darío, Juan Ramón Jiménez)	199
§ iv. The Castilian Reaction (Antonio Machado)	220

CONTENTS

IV. THE ESSAY	231
§ i. Ganivet	231
§ ii. Unamuno	233
§ iii. Azorín	244
§ iv. Other Essayists	256
V. CRITICISM AND SCHOLARSHIP	263
§ i. Menéndez y Pelayo	263
§ ii. Other Critics and Historians	274
§ iii. Recent Criticism	278
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL LIST OF AUTHORS	289
INDEX	309

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I

THE LITERATURE of the last half-century in Spain is not the less interesting to study because it is largely experimental, largely negative, forming a period of transition, a preparation for a mightier future. If the writers of this period somewhat resemble stone-cutters sitting by a quarry, each diligently chiselling his separate stone, rather making ready the materials for a splendid edifice than themselves building it, their work is nevertheless necessary and important, often individually charming and delightful. Apart from the merits of individual writers, it is of absorbing interest to watch the reaction of the living and humane Spanish genius to the imposition of scientific schools and systems, to which Spanish writers could not avoid paying a passing tribute. The Spanish temperament, individual and independent, has an original flavour and creative force which refuses to be cramped and shackled by the tyranny of mechanical rules. The Spanish drama maintained a freedom in regard to the unities as superb as that of the early Spanish epics in the matter of rhythm. Spanish thinkers do not form themselves into schools of philosophy, a fact which has sometimes led to the erroneous belief that Spanish thought and philosophy are non-existent.

The writers of Spain often look abroad for their models; they did so many centuries ago, when communication with

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

other countries was much more restricted; in modern days they are influenced, as could not fail to be the case, by the fame of certain schools, but they react individually and tend to change the school so introduced into their midst from an ordered method to a living individual thing, or, if you will, from a system into fragments. The best recent instance of this was the way in which Naturalism, invading Spain, was met and vanquished by Regionalism and the scientific system was merged in individual life. Sometimes these independent flights of genius, proceeding experimentally, are over-ambitious and end in disaster or in mighty fragments; but as a rule there is an instinctive sense of proportion, rhythm and harmony, which supplies the place of mechanical rules. The *Poema de Mio Cid* may seem to throw metre to the winds, yet it maintains an admirable rhythm and rugged harmony.

Some observers, while granting Spanish literature originality of form and local colour, would deny it originality and depth of thought; but profound original thought is of such marvellous rareness in the world that no country can afford to throw stones, especially as originality has so many false disguises, such as obscurity and vagueness, into which Spanish writers very seldom fall. In the directness and sincerity of Spanish literature there is a flame-like intensity which often contains as much depth and originality as are to be found in the more reasoned lucubrations of other literatures, although the depth and originality may make themselves felt merely in momentary gleanings, *por arranques*, rather than by method and logic. Such impulsive flashes of head and heart acting together are very far removed from, are indeed the exact opposite of, superficial insipidity. Talent, or rather one would say latent genius, is so common in Spain that it is lavished freely in coffee-house conversa-

INTRODUCTION

tions instead of being hoarded for the printing-press, existing in the form of potential, not potted literature. It disappears apparently without a trace, in sheer waste and neglect; yet this expansiveness and spontaneity seem necessary to the development of the Spanish genius, which requires to live in the street, in close contact with the people and with reality: quite recently, when writers have shown a greater tendency to retire into the study, Spanish literature has perhaps not been the gainer. It must always be a fascinating but ungrateful task to criticize the living. Whether it be true or not that one must count no man happy until he is dead, it is certainly true that one can judge no living writer happily. One may fall into unfairness in dealing with the dead, one almost inevitably must in treating of those who have not had the good manners to consult the critic's convenience by dying forthwith after producing what seems to be their most characteristic work. When one remembers that Azorín, Pío Baroja, Ramón del Valle-Inclán are barely fifty, and Ricardo León, Pérez de Ayala, Miró, Jiménez, Eduardo Marquina and Martínez Sierra well under fifty; that Benavente is still under sixty and Unamuno a vigorous sixty, while Blasco Ibáñez is approaching the same age with energy and faculties unimpaired, one realizes the difficulty of fully appreciating their work and genius. On the other hand, the death of Pérez Galdós in 1920, of Emilia Pardo Bazán in 1921, of Jacinto Oetavio Picón in 1923, enables the critic to judge their work in its completeness, while the same may be said of that of Palacio Valdés, who is happily still alive. In a book on contemporary literature it is especially with the living that the critic has to deal, and more space is here purposely given to some of the young writers than to the older writers of established fame, such as Alar-

cón, Valera or Pereda. Time will inevitably alter the values and proportions, and writers here barely mentioned or perhaps altogether passed over may come to figure as as important headstones in future histories of Spanish literature. One can but humbly and sincerely express one's poor opinion and leave the rest to time.

That a splendid future awaits Spanish literature can hardly be doubted in view of the ever-increasing interest now taken in Spanish studies throughout the "civilized" world and the growing appreciation for the force and beauty of the most noble of living languages. No excuse is here made for giving some of the quotations in the original, since it is high time that educated persons who do not know this important and delightful language should learn it: "discant," as Luis de Leon energetically said of those ignorant of Hebrew. When the world has grown to years of discretion and the various countries have become convinced that their interest and prestige lie not in foreign conquest nor in settling disputes by the sword, but in improving and developing their own soil and genius, the spiritual influence of Spain is likely to be very great. The following pages will attempt to show how she has been preparing herself for that future during the last fifty years. We shall find some reasons for fear and disquiet as well as much cause for hope. The essential question is how far Spain is succeeding in retaining her original, indigenous character in the face of the cosmopolitan uniformity imposed by the material advance of modern civilization; to what extent she is maintaining her ability to supply what a superficial civilization constantly requires: balance and rightness of proportion, depth and intensity, a high sense of spiritual values.

In order to contain a study of modern Spanish literature

INTRODUCTION

within the covers of one volume, it is imperative to limit it in two somewhat contradictory directions. The great and growing literature of Spanish South America has to be omitted, save for a passing reference to writers who have more immediately influenced the literature of the Peninsula, tempting as it would be to linger over the work of poets such as Darío, Silva, Santos Chocano, or critics such as Rodó (1872–1917) or Señor Lugones. Secondly, in the Peninsula itself no space can be afforded for the very fascinating regional literatures, the flourishing growth of which in Spain as in other countries, but more prominently than in most other countries, is one of the important facts of modern times. Basque literature has shown a tendency to revive under the fostering care of Don Julio Urquijo and other enthusiastic scholars, while notable triumphs have been achieved in the Asturian *bable* by José Caveda, in the dialect of Extremadura by Gabriel y Galán and more recently by Don Luis Chamizo (author of a volume of *rapsodias extremeñas* entitled *El Miajón de los Castúos* [1921]), in the Murcian dialect by Vicente Medina, and especially by the admirable Valencian poems of Teodoro Llorente. The Catalan revival alone, with such names as Verdaguer, Maragall, Guimerá, Rusiñol, requires a separate volume, which would include Mallorcan poets such as the bilingual Don Juan Alcover and Don Miguel Costa y Llobera, while modern Galician poetry, with Pondal, Rosalía de Castro, Curros Enriquez and a score of other names (see Eugenio Carré Aldao's *Literatura Gallega*, 2nd ed., 1911), deserves a detailed study.

II

The period under review falls sharply into two parts,

hing respectively on the cardinal years 1868 and 1898. Although by the middle of the Nineteenth Century Romanticism was virtually dead and its appearance in the novels of Alarcón and the plays of Echegaray was regarded as a late aftermath, it was the revolution of 1868 that paved the way for the introduction of new schools. So many striking events, the fall of Queen Isabel, the second Carlist War, the reign of Amadeo, the Republic, with a new president every few months, could not be crowded into six years without powerfully stirring men's minds. In literature, as in politics, the ideas introduced by the Spanish Liberals were mainly of French origin, and although the most important writer who may be said to have sprung out of the revolution of 1868, Benito Pérez Galdós, was influenced by Dickens, English literature as a whole in Spain now failed to occupy a place corresponding to that of Scott and Byron among the Romantics.

The legend of a narrow fanatical Spain belongs to the past, to history as it has been written. Spain has never closed her doors to new ideas as such, although she has claimed the right to examine and reject them. The purblind spirit of politics might impose many foreign customs unsuited to the Spanish temperament, but outside politics the Spanish genius has been saved from many pitfalls by its essential humanity, its faculty for seeing life steadily and seeing it whole. Nowhere was this better seen than in the Spanish attitude towards the French Naturalistic school at the time when Naturalism became "the palpitating question" in Spain. This reaction of Spain against the new school affords an excellent insight into the Spanish genius. It might have been expected that Naturalism, with its narrow determinism and impersonal

INTRODUCTION

method, would not prove congenial to Spaniards, who for thought or action require to have their heart in a matter and are not inclined to cold abstract reasoning, scientific thought or methodical compilation. Moreover, in the Spaniard's temperament the spiritual and material have ever been so intimately connected and fused, the spiritual so vividly real and substantial, that it is especially difficult for him to divest himself of the spiritual element in order neutrally to catalogue and chronicle dead matter. The humane realism of Spain rebelled against literature of the clinic.

The writers who have attempted to carry Naturalism to its full length in Spain have almost inevitably succumbed to falseness and artificiality. The earlier Spanish novelists who dabbled in Naturalism soon made it clear that they preferred the whole man to what was but half an art. The real and very effective Spanish answer to Naturalism was Regionalism. Spanish writers were willing to study reality, but it must be with the heart as well as with the head. The scenes of Emilia Pardo Bazán's first attempt at Naturalism, in *La Tribuna*, were those of her own girlhood at Coruña: the scientific method became personal. Pereda might have been said to belong to the Naturalistic school had he not written not only with his intellect but with his affections; the whole man, not a scientifically registering brain. In this connection it is interesting to note that Señor Baroja makes the valuable confession in *Juventud, Egoatría* that "my books fall into two distinct classes: those that I wrote with more trouble than pleasure and those that I wrote with more pleasure than trouble." To the latter class obviously belong his novels of the Basque country.

It was to Regionalism that the Spanish novel in the last

quarter of the Nineteenth Century owed its greatest triumphs. This success was partly due to the individualistic character of Spaniards, who like to reign supreme, however limited may be their realm, and find a difficulty in co-operating with others. Each regional novelist felt that he was cultivating his very own garden; he was the free individual dealing with a broad human subject. On the other hand, Naturalism, determinism, positivism and the Krausist philosophy, although they won disciples in Spain, were soon felt to be cramping and narrowing and foreign to the Spanish genius. In the same way, when criticism dwelt in a narrow room, being the mere handmaid of literature, it was comparatively neglected in Spain, but now that it has built itself a palace of its own and indeed tends to absorb other branches of literature, the critic in Spain, thus raised to independent sovereignty, has attained great eminence. In fact the two most marked features in Spanish literature in the last third of the Nineteenth Century were the success of the novel and the rise of criticism, although it should be added that the latter phenomenon was largely the outcome of the genius of one man, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo. It was not a great age of lyric poetry, for while Zorrilla, Campoamor and Núñez de Arce held the field, the forerunners of a more subtle, subjective and intimate poetry, Becquer, Querol, Rosalía de Castro, were destined to enjoy their greatest fame posthumously, in the Twentieth Century. In their day a more rhetorical poetry still prevailed, while parliamentary eloquence produced some of its finest effects, culminating in the illimitable, inimitable flow of Emilio Castelar's speeches. As to the drama, the success of the plays of Echegaray could not prevent it from breaking up into one-hour pieces, the *género chico*.

INTRODUCTION

III

In the Twentieth Century this breaking-up process was carried further and extended to all branches of literature, one might almost say to all branches of Spanish life. To divide into small sections seemed to be the order of the day. The old dualism, which was congenial to the national temperament, had been adopted when the country emerged from cantonalism after the Restoration of 1874, but was now apparently dead. In the alternating periods of Liberal and Conservative rule, with much scope for eloquence and pompous parliamentary debates, the indifference of the mass of the nation to the political parties and elections showed that there was something rotten in the State of Denmark, although this very aloofness was a guarantee that there was also a sound element. But now the two traditional political parties broke up into groups, no less than twenty of which were represented in the last Parliament before the *coup d'état* of September, 1923. This change from dualism to polytheism manifested itself throughout the national life; even in the bullfight, in which two "swords" no longer divided popular favour between them as in the Nineteenth Century; and it killed parliamentary eloquence, the last great representative of which was Don Antonio Maura, and was fatal to the drama. The *género chico* became further reduced into the *género ínfimo* and faded away before the cinematograph. After the impressive but unreal drama of Echeagaray and the political and social drama of Pérez Galdós and Dicenta, a new drama of great value and interest came into being with the work of Benavente, Linares Rivas and Martínez Sierra, but it was for the study as much as for the stage. The subtlety and wit of Señor Benavente are not primarily dramatic,

while the poetical plays of Don Eduardo Marquina, the lyrical plays of Señor Valle-Inclán, and the symbolical plays of Señor Goy de Silva were likewise not essentially dramatic.

After the defeat of 1898, Spain, deprived of her last colonial possessions, turned her eyes inwards, took stock of her resources and fell into a severe and sometimes pessimistic mood of introspection and analysis. A group of writers, the so-called Generation of 1898 (the very existence of which Señor Baroja denies), determined to take the machine to pieces. They were resolved to do away with everything that savoured of hollow pretence and to make war on all surface values; to face and express facts, to get down to the bedrock of reality, to some unassailable ultimate framework on which to build solidly and securely. Stripping away the pomp of rhetoric and conventional or hollow-sounding phrases, they made a cult of intellect and worshipped thin lines and outlines, the art of El Greco, the primitive poets. Their most enduring and attractive contribution was their zeal for precision. "Each thing in written language," says Azorín, "must be named by its exact name; periphrases and circumlocutions will embarrass, hamper, and obscure style. But in order to name each thing by its name, we must know the names of things. If we consider a house or the countryside we will find hundreds of objects, details and aspects, tastes and occupations which we cannot name. And yet all these things have or have had a name; and we must learn and use those names. If they exist in the language of the people, let us transfer them without hesitation to literary language; if they exist in old books, in the classics, let us unearth them straightway." (*Clásicos y Modernos.*)

The new writers took for their master Pérez Galdós, who had shown himself a keen, in some respects an un-Spanish

INTRODUCTION

critic of shams and shallowness and a master of true Spanish realism. To Galdós, to quote again one of the Generation of 1898, the subtle Azorín, "the new generation of writers owes the very essence of its being." He introduced "something into contemporary realism unknown to the older novelists," "the spiritual atmosphere of things," "dark, grey, uniform, everyday life," "the social spirit, the sense in the artist of a reality superior to ordinary superficial reality, the relation existing between a real visible obvious fact and the series of concomitant causes by which it is determined." It was claimed that Galdós had introduced Spain to herself and to modern methods. Although he could show himself an artist of great power, a creator, his work as a whole was that of an analytical critic as much as of an artist. But the Generation of 1898 also went back to the primitive poets of Spain, and if they were in a sense rebels against Castile and sought their inspiration largely abroad, casting aside temporarily the national revival fostered by Menéndez y Pelayo, they were fundamentally perhaps more national and less cosmopolitan than they knew. At all events, Castile absorbed them, so that just as what seems to be the most Castilian, art is that of Andalusian Velazquez and Cretan Theotocopuli and Extremenian Zurbarán and Valencian Ribera and Basque Zuloaga, so in modern Spanish literature the pages showing keenest appreciation of Castile come from the pens of the Basques Baroja and Unamuno, the Andalusians León and Machado, Azorín of the east coast, Pérez Galdós of the Canary Islands.

Nevertheless the revolt was real and sincere. "A spirit of protest and revolt characterized the youth of 1898. Ramiro de Maeztu in fervent impetuous articles overthrew traditional values and showed a longing for a new, more powerful Spain.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Pío Baroja, with his cold analysis, reproduced the Castilian countryside and introduced a deep sense of disconnection into the novel; the old rounded, pompous, sonorous style broke up in his hands and was transformed into a dry, precise algebraical analysis. Valle Inclán, with his haughtiness of a gran señor, with his long whiskers and his refined style, exercised a powerful attraction on the younger writers and dazzled them with descriptions of Nature and figures suggested by the Italian Renaissance." "The generation of 1898 loves old towns and Nature; attempts to revive the primitive poets (Berceo, Juan Ruiz, Santillana); fans the enthusiasm for El Greco which had begun in Catalonia and publishes a special number of a journal in his honour entitled "Mercurio"; restores Góngora, one of whose lines was quoted by Verlaine, who considered himself acquainted with the poet of Córdoba; declares for Romanticism in the banquet offered to Pío Baroja on the occasion of the appearance of his novel *Camino de Perfección*; shows enthusiasm for Larra, and in his honour made a pilgrimage to the cemetery in which he lay buried and read a speech before his grave, on which it placed bunches of violets; finally it strives to draw nearer to reality and to render the language more flexible and subtle and introduce old words into it, with the object of seizing reality with vigorous precision. In a word, the Generation of 1898 has merely maintained the ideas of the generation that preceded it; for it has felt the passionate cry of Echegaray, the mordant spirit of Campoamor and Galdós' love of reality."

That is the Generation of 1898 as described by one of themselves, and the picture is confirmed by more impartial critics: "Towards the end of the century modernism makes its appearance in literature and art. The poets show less

INTRODUCTION

concern for form and become profound and idealistic. In painting the primitives are admired and imitated, and eminent artists reveal to us nooks of cities and landscapes full of character, somewhat roughly, in a way to please those who seek emotion only. The Spanish poets copy the incorrect style of Gonzalo de Berceo. A painter of genius, Zuloaga, becomes the painter of mystic Spain, and in his pictures ugly forms are permeated by a great internal beauty. Spanish art shows a fervour for all that is primitive and Catholic. El Greco becomes the master of all these restless spirits." (Manuel Gálvez, *El Solar de la Raza.*) Restless, eager, unquiet: on the one hand a searching analysis of all past values, on the other, keen curiosity to examine all that was either very new or very old. Among other things Castilian poetry and prose went into the melting-pot. The old hollow, pompous, sonorous versification, the "brilliant, artificial, oratorical poetry," was to disappear before a more subtle, supple kind, "an intimate, profound, spiritual and unobtrusive poetry contrasting with the rhymed eloquence which here commonly passes for poetry."

The new poetry might often dispense with rhyme or fixed form, but was to be lit with a spiritual intensity from within. Much of Castilian poetry had been rhetorical and emphatic; it was now to deal in half-tones, suggestion, whispering silences, an elfin music. But it is not very easy to say where even modern modernism, to use what is really a necessary expression, begins. It is generally agreed that long before Rubén Darío, under the influence of the French Symbolists, perceived how much more marvellous an instrument Castilian might be than French for the music of the new school, modernist Spanish poetry had been published by Becquer in 1871, by Querol in 1877, and by Rosalía de Castro in

1884. And if we go much further back, the poetry of Lope de Vega and Luis de Leon, Castilians both, shows a subtle music, *de arte nervioso y nuevo*, as of thought placed on paper without the interposition of rhetoric or hollowness, and with more substance, moreover, than that of the modern modernists. For delicious as are some of the numbers flowing from the modernist poets of Spain and South America, we have the impression that they are rather experimenting in new forms than conveying any significant message, or at least that their message consists mainly in the presentation of a new instrument for a great poetry to come. We feel, indeed, about the modernist poetry that the bloom on the plum is often exquisite, but we should have liked to have the plum as well. It is very well "to sacrifice a world in order to polish a line of verse," but the poet must have something to say, and may love details only on condition of raising, fusing, concentrating, sublimating them into something permanent and essential. There is a thinness in much, by no means in all modernist verse, because it is rather an exercise in metre than the result of thought, suffering and experience. Nevertheless the modernist movement, in itself a passing phase, has perhaps vitally affected Castilian poetry not only as regards form, rendering the verse more supple and, as it were, invertebrate, but in enlarging the scope of poetry by holding nothing in itself too small or familiar to be included: all the 'common' things disdained by the Olympians were no longer to be banished implacably from Parnassus.

In prose a corresponding attention to details and common things was even more welcome. It may not be true to say, as a modern critic has said, that "Spanish prose lacks tenderness, softness and elegance" (the reading that could support

INTRODUCTION

such a verdict must be singularly limited); but the example of Castelar had shown that there might be great pomp and music of syllables with scarcely any meaning behind. The sincerity of modern prose-writers such as Baroja might be a little crude but was an inevitable reaction, while even the modern prose-writers who have been taxed with insincerity come close to reality, as, for instance, Valle-Inclán with his Galician peasants. The analysis and dissection of the innovators were not confined to the manipulation of rhythm and the construction of prose. They seemed, indeed, to have divided the whole field of Spanish life among them. Señor Unamuno, while well aware of the importance of vitally renewing Spanish poetry and Spanish prose (which in 1903 he described as "a language poor in all that is most vitally spiritual and abstract"), took for his special province the realm of thought, and, like the Alvarez Quinteros' *Febrerillo el Loco*, "shakes up people's minds." Azorín devoted himself to breaking up and renewing or, since extremes meet, archaicizing the prose; Señor Benavente gave a new scope and pliancy to the drama; Señor Ortega y Gasset brought a similar chemical analysis to bear on philosophy, and Señor Baroja on life. The novel in the treatment of Azorín, the essay in that of Xenius, were deprived of their constructive power. History became scientific and impersonal in the hands of Don Rafael Altamira, who sternly eschewed the eloquent periods of previous Spanish historians; while oratory, as we have seen, simply died.

If sometimes Nemesis seems to overtake the iconoclasts, or their descendants, so that they are left with the pieces impotently in their hands (a poem in four words in Don Antonio Machado's *Nuevas Canciones* or an essay in seven in Señor Gomez de la Serna's *Greguerías* or in Señor Ber-

gamín's *El Cochete y La Estrella*), the process of analysis was nevertheless at the time necessary, natural and salutary. It is not in Spain only that the drama has resolved itself into *género chico* and *género ínfimo* or that increasing favour has been shown to the short story at the expense of the novel or to the brief lyric and sonnet in place of the longer poems dear to both Classicists and Romantics. The younger generation in Spain came with hammers and chisels, which often fell a trifle ineffectually on the images which they would have wished to smash in pieces. The reputations which they attacked stand more secure to-day than they did at the end of the Nineteenth Century. In a more general, less personal sense, however, these young writers could wield the axe, and it is curious and a little comical to note the systematic abolition of Nineteenth-Century nobleness (that high seriousness or *σπουδαιότης* which they would prefer to call Victorian convention) owing to the suspicion that it was a pose of hollow rhetoric. No doubt a few of the oaks were spurious, mere stage-trees; but the energetic modernists attempted to cut down the whole forest. They had a certain audacity and persistence which imposed itself, either through repetition, as in the case of Azorín, Valle-Inclán, Jiménez, or by means of penetrating attacks, as with Baroja and Unamuno. Their attitude towards the older writers is significant. Pereda became their *bête noire*, partly perhaps because Pereda with his mordant satire could attack others as well as defend himself, but chiefly because the full breath of life and sea and hills pervading his pages was sufficient to blow away their more flimsy tabernacles. In proportion as their reputation increased, their outlook became more generous, and Azorín, for instance, has recently paid a glowing tribute to Pereda and *Peñas Arriba*. The work of Emilia

INTRODUCTION

Pardo Bazán and Vicente Blasco Ibáñez was similarly too vigorous to find favour; the style of the former was too rich and catholic, that of the latter too careless. On the other hand Galdós, the Radical revolutionary Galdós with his *castizo* style and his clear sense of reality (except in matters political), never lost his hold on the younger generation.

Even Menéndez y Pelayo could not escape the censure of critics who shunned what was literary like the plague, for Menéndez y Pelayo was literary to his finger-tips. He was also a thinker and possesses a broad humanity, an intellectual comprehensiveness which his critics proved unable to attain. They might with a sure instinct have singled him out as their worst enemy, for he had founded a school which stood like a bulwark against newfangled methods and foreign importations, and his successors, working eagerly in many fields, carried on into the Twentieth Century that great work of Spanish criticism and research which he had inaugurated in the last quarter of the Nineteenth. It is, indeed, this contrast which gives one of the peculiar features of Spanish literature in the first years of the new century. We hear, on the one hand, the hammers of the iconoclasts breaking up the old values, and, on the other hand, the pick-axes of the critics and research workers as they laboriously perfect and complete the figures of the great writers of the past, Calderon or Lope de Vega, Luis de Leon, Vives, Tirso de Molina, Cervantes. The touchstone of the value of the new school of writers must be their reverence for such figures of the past; and it should be noted that some of them have helped actively in the new scholarship, substituting minute study for the more abstract and eloquent panegyrics in vogue of yore.

IV

The Great War brought about a closer bond between Spanish America and Spain, a change which is likely to have the most far-reaching effects. South Americans who had considered Paris and everything Parisian the acme of civilization, made the acquaintance of Spain for the first time, and some of them at least found in Spain their true spiritual home, *el solar de la raza*. "That country," wrote Don Manuel Galvez, "is one of the most intense spiritual centres in Europe"; another Argentinian, Don Enrique Larreta, penetrated deeply into the Spain of the Sixteenth Century and the spirit of Avila; and, indeed, Rubén Darío and many others of the American poets felt the influence and fascination of Castile. While Spanish South America in its growing depth of culture and also Europe in disillusion of its material civilization are beginning to realize and appreciate more fully and truly the value and strength of Castile, an ever-increasing invasion of translations at Madrid proves that the cosmopolitan tendency of the capital and court does not tend to diminish, and that it would seem anxious to vie with Barcelona in the somewhat pale and shallow universalism represented by such writers as the subtle Xenius. It is probable that the names of Anatole France and H. G. Wells are now more familiar to many a *madrileño* than those of Pereda or Valera. Señor Blasco Ibáñez has attained a world-wide reputation by abandoning the regional for the cosmopolitan novel. Señor Benavente, who is not earthy of the Spanish soil but a *madrileño* and a citizen of all capital cities, has won the Nobel prize.

But the Castilian genius, if it willingly looks abroad, absorbs what it copies and is conservative, original and crea-

INTRODUCTION

tive. The considerable work now going on in the libraries, convents, archives and universities under the twofold inspiration of the genius of Menéndez y Pelayo and of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza founded by Francisco Giner de los Ríos (1843–1915), will prove a powerful obstacle to the inroads of cosmopolitanism, and the Spanish are perhaps not really in danger of underestimating their great writers of the past or of overvaluing more or less excellent translations of more or less excellent foreign authors. Moreover, the influence of a Ruskin or a Pater or a Meredith, which might be great and beneficial, must be considerably diminished if they are read in translations. But in any case it will happily be very long before the Spanish writer ceases to be an individualist. Señor Benavente was born at Madrid, but other writers come to the capital with the mark of their native province strongly and indeed ineradicably upon them, and while this is so, Spanish literature will not be wholly divorced from that which in the past has given it its chief strength and peculiar fascination: close contact with the people and the soil.

There has always been a tendency in Spain for schools to fall to pieces while the individual writers and thinkers remain and flourish. The very fact that literature in Spain was far less than elsewhere a pale product of the study, in part accounts for this, since there was less temptation to form personal groups maintained by mutual praise. Spain's writers, however inspired they might claim to be, did not dwell apart. Even the remote Pereda and the industrious Galdós became deputies and sat for a time in Parliament. The further back we go, the more national appears the character of Spanish literature, and it was the merit of the Romantics that they dealt preferably in national

themes. It remained for Spanish literature in the Twentieth Century to become more than in the past a literature of the study. In lyric poetry the influence of Victor Hugo, Leconte de Lisle and Baudelaire was replaced by that of the French Symbolists, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud, imported into Spain through South America. In the bitter disillusion of past hopes the time was ripe for experiments, and the genius of Rubén Darío spread a craze for the cosmopolitan, the rare and the exotic. The attention now given to manner rather than to matter necessarily limited the sphere of the new school and withdrew it from street and coffee-house into the study and the drawing-room.

In reacting against Parnassianism as too white and marble, the Symbolists turned rather to the coloured lights of a chemist's window than to Nature and life. This was rendered possible partly by the increased prosperity brought to Spain by the War and the rise in the standard of comfort among a wider class, so that the number of readers grew. Those who might prefer to stay at home comfortably reading rather than go to theatre or café became sufficiently numerous to ensure a tolerable sale for authors who wrote only for the cultured few. The increased favour towards Spanish literature in South America, to which welcome development reference has already been made, and the growing interest in foreign countries also assured a steady sale. Thus one of the leading poets, Señor Jiménez, can afford to address his lyrics "*a la minoría siempre*," and Señor Pérez de Ayala's novels have a certain esoteric air. The national drama tends to disappear in psychological, lyrical or symbolical plays which make their appeal to a select cultivated audience. The national and popular elements are in abeyance. One of Spain's most distinguished modern poets,

INTRODUCTION

Don Antonio Machado, has remarked recently (it might perhaps have been better said in prose):

se fué toda la España de Mérimée

Writers turn, indeed, to popular types and the simple popular poetry for inspiration, but folk-lore in proportion as it is studied in cold print shrinks in reality. National themes are replaced by social and socialistic theories, science, the position of women, divorce, the study of life in large cities. Yet it would be a mistake to consider that the new Spanish literature is wholly of the study or to believe that the modern writers are entirely wrapped up in shooting darts, poisoned or otherwise, at one another from their ivory towers. Among the most recent poets (and the same tendency is apparent in art and music), there is observable a significant reaction in favour of the national, the Castilian, the *castizo*. Another very encouraging sign in recent Spanish literature is the tendency to broader, harmonizing theories and to an idealism rooted in but transcending reality. After the new schools and foreign theories have been given a trial, it would seem that the genuine spiritual realism of Spain is likely to come into its own again.

It is remarkable also that the introduction of greater subtlety and even preciousness into Spanish literature does not appear to have impaired its fertility. Something of the fecundity of genius, generous, all-embracing, which astonished the world in the days of Lope de Vega and more recently in the days of Menéndez y Pelayo and his school and of Pérez Galdós, continues in the Spain of the Twentieth Century. The volumes published by such delicate writers in verse and prose as Señor Jiménez and Señor Martínez Sierra for instance, are very numerous; Azorín has added brief

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

essay to brief essay until his complete works form a considerable mass; the plays of Señor Benavente and of the brothers Alvarez Quintero are numbered by the score. In a country of life so vigorous as Spain one need not despair. The peasants will continue to sing their songs, and the national life will again inspire the drama, the novel, perhaps even lyrical poetry to fresh successes.

It might be a nice question to decide whether the drama or criticism, the play or the essay, is likely to be the heir of the diverse literary kinds so resolutely broken up of recent years. Without forgetting that lyric poetry has recently displayed a renewed vitality and that the essay and play have themselves not escaped the disintegrating influences, one may believe that in these two forms, perhaps in a combination of the two (the drama as a criticism of life), the Spanish genius will find its most living channel. Anatole France expected criticism to rise up and devour all other literary kinds; and criticism, thus become universal, appeals to the Castilian temperament and will exercise a faculty, not of negative analysis, but of constructive harmony. In this way it will not interfere with but rather encourage individualistic art.

With Pérez Galdós and Blasco Ibáñez literature in Spain, literature worthy of the name, became professional for the first time and assumed a more mechanical production; but it did not lose touch with the nation and despite the introduction of the crowd into literature in the novels of Baroja and Blasco Ibáñez, despite the invasion of scientific themes, it still derived its force from the individual type and was a literature of the heart as much as of the head. In the second decade of the Twentieth Century, the novels of Señor Pérez de Ayala, in many ways representative of the new

INTRODUCTION

literature, are addressed to the intellectuals, instead of to all classes and ages, as were those of Galdós. The cult of intellect is in itself nothing new; the art of El Greco is three hundred years old and will always remain an adventure, a fresh individual discovery, not a universal possession. But such a voyage of discovery in contemporary literature is a luxury provided for the few and can be welcomed as without danger only in an age of overflowing literary riches, when plenty of other fare is provided for the less adventurous.

In another aspect, however, the work of Señor Pérez de Ayala is more national and universal; in the prominence, that is, given in his novels to character. Thirty years ago, in 1893, Menéndez y Pelayo spoke of the *paladares estragados de hoy* among Spanish readers. The writer has two ways of meeting this state of affairs. He may introduce into his work incidents ever more strained and lurid, increasing the demand of a perverted appetite even as he increases the supply to satisfy it, until literature has become devoid of all good taste and literary flavour. Or he may have the wit to realize that a palate sated with piquant and strange delicacies may prefer a humble fare of beans and bacon to all the most exquisite devices and inventions of the bluest of blue ribands; in other words, that a novel in which attention is paid to the quiet development of character may hold the field when a story of forced cinematographic interest has begun to pall. And since the interest of the Spanish is still mainly in man and the study of human character, it is not improbable that the Spanish literature of the future, enriched and enlightened by the fascinating experiments of the last half-century, will develop into a more potent growth. Its force will be sufficient to induce the little rivulets of the

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

modernists to converge into a fuller, broader stream, ceasing on the one hand to refine into unreality and on the other hand to record or invent perversions of life and call them Life. The true Spanish literature of the Twentieth Century, to which we may confidently look forward, will shed these dangerous and tedious extremes and return to that substantial and essential Spanish realism which deals, not with narrow phases of the life in modern cities, but with the broad eternal passions of real men and women and, deeply rooted in the soil, the *sabor de la tierra*, pierces to the heart of humanity.

I. THE NOVEL

I. THE NOVEL

§ 1. THE REGIONALIST NOVEL. PEREDA

WHEN IN 1854, at the age of twenty-one, JOSÉ MARÍA DE PEREDA went to Madrid from his native Montaña, he found the Spanish novel still in extreme infancy: “*estaba menos que en pañales en la patria del Quijote.*” There was a great mass of novels translated from the French, but good original Spanish novels were rare (*rarísimas*). In *Pedro Sánchez*, the novel in which he describes his experiences of that year, he further tells us that the favourite French authors for translation were Victor Hugo, George Sand, Dumas, Eugène Sue, Paul de Kock, and Soulié. Romanticism, although it was not dead (as was about to appear in Alarcón’s first novel), survived chiefly in the poems of Carolina Coronado and Gertrudis Gómez de Avellanada and in the persons of the Duque de Rivas and Zorrilla. The stage, with Bretón de los Herreros, García Gutiérrez, Hartzenbusch, Tamayo y Baus and Ventura de la Vega, was in somewhat better plight than lyric poetry or the novel. Valera, although thirty, was still literarily unknown, Alarcón’s *El Final de Norma* was yet unpublished; Fernán Caballero had published *La Gaviota* (1849) and *Clemencia* (1852), but Pereda noticed that these novels were liked rather for their insipid scenes and alien characters than for the indigenous descriptions: “pictures full of colour and truth” which render them immortal.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

It was in these scenes, in the sketches of Mesonero Romanos, the *Escenas Andaluzas* of *El Solitario* and in the *Novelas Ejemplares* of Cervantes that Pereda found his models. He had come to Madrid with a deep love of his country and of his *patria chica*, and became a keen critic of the internationalized literature and of the society of the capital. He resolved to follow his own bent, to cultivate his own garden, to be Spanish and regional, turning for his characters to the people and for his subjects to life and reality. Although he had published no novel when the first novels of Pérez Galdós made their appearance, it was Pereda who was the real founder and champion of the modern Spanish school of realism, the traditional realism of Cervantes and *Lazarillo de Tormes*. He began to write about ten years after the publication of *La Gaviota*, and when *Escenas Montañesas* appeared in 1864, a few critics of insight could hail the advent of a master. The names of Cervantes and Rembrandt came not amiss in dealing with the author of *La Leva*, *La Robla*, and *Suum cuique*, or of *El Fin de una Raza* and *Al amor de los tizones* in *Bocetos al temple*; so sure, so classically sure was his touch, so natural and indigenous his dialogue, so pure and vigorous his style, filled with strong idiomatic phrases and the savour of the soil.

For a citizen of some great city, for one who can read with pleasure an emasculated translation of Tolstoi's *Anna Karenine* in which the central figure of Levine scarcely appears, fully to appreciate the work of Pereda it would be necessary for him to undergo a process of conversion similar to that of Marcelo in *Peñas Arriba*. For those who have had the privilege of birth amid mountains, his novels take their proper rank at once among the greatest literary works of the Nineteenth Century. Since mountains existed before

great cities, the burden of disproving his greatness must rest on those who cannot understand it. Pereda wrote out of the abundance of his heart, his mordant satire is *conservative*, directed against destructive innovations and negations, all that was false or lifeless. Thus he attacked the pedants and dandies in *Tipos Trashumantes* and Madrid society in *La Montálvez*. He was not intolerant, he could see two sides of a question, his tolerant remark about the religion of the English contrasts strangely with the rabid intolerance of George Borrow in Spain; but he did not believe that what was wrong could be right, and will always be thought an unmitigated reactionary by those who consider that it is the duty of the old order to fall flat like the walls of Jericho at the first summons to surrender. Pereda had the wit and spirit to defend it, and time has proved him in the right. No doubt it was a weakness to have a thesis to prove, but his keen observation easily mastered his didacticism and produced a series of graphic scenes even when, as in *El Buey Suelto*, the purpose was to defend marriage against Balzac. *De tal palo tal astilla*, in answer to Galdós' artificial *Gloria*, was less successful. A tendency to make his villains too black and thus fall into melodrama occasionally appears in his work and spoils a few pages of *Don Gonzalo*, *La Puchera*, and even of such a masterpiece as *Peñas Arriba*. There was a certain crudeness, too, in some of his early sketches, as there is in the too painful account of the dynamite explosion at Santander in *Pachín González*, at the close of his literary life. A further weakness was the slightness of his plots. His books were really always a series of *cuadros de costumbres* more or less closely strung together. The more skilful construction of *Pedro Sánchez* caused it

to be greeted with enthusiasm by Clarín, Emilia Pardo Bazán and other critics. It stands just below *La Puchera*, but cannot rank with the masterpieces which crowned his work: *El Sabor de la Tierra*, *Sotileza* and *Peñas Arriba*. It was always his native Montaña that gave him his greatest triumphs and his universal interest. He described his electioneering experiences there in *Hombres de Pró*, published in *Bocetos al temple*; the results of politics and "progress" there in *Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera*; and it is the pages dealing with the Montaña which give its chief value to *Pedro Sánchez*. A few months' acquaintance sufficed Cervantes for an immortal sketch of the Seville *pícaros*; Pereda had the advantage of a deep and life-long knowledge of his subject, and with a firm hand resembling that of the earlier master he immortalized the fisherfolk of Santander and the peasants, priests and *hidalgos* of the Mountain: "these people and rocks and even animals which seemed to me, by dint of seeing and feeling them, flesh of my bones and blood of my own veins." (*Peñas Arriba*).

If one compares Pierre Loti's exquisite but superficial *Ramuntcho* with *Peñas Arriba*, one has a painted villa by the side of a granite *solar*. Pereda, with a deeper sincerity, in old Santander, in Coteruco and Tablanca, Robleces, Cumbrales and Rinconeda, described *figures et choses qui resteront toujours*; but it may be that a Pereda is scarcely possible in any country of less sane and genuine democracy than that prevalent in Spain. He has the gift of drawing memorable characters. It is not only the noble and attractive priests, drawn so true to life, Padre Apolinar of *Sotileza*, Don Sabas of *Peñas Arriba*, Don Frutos of *Don Gonzalo*, Don Alejo of *La Puchera*; or the penniless gentry of the Montaña, heroic figures such as Don Celso, or Don

THE NOVEL

Lope del Robledal and Don Román Pérez de la Llosía in *Don Gonzalo*, or the nameless Hidalgo of the Tower (a portrait of a living person, Don Angel de los Ríos y Ríos) so magnificently described in *Peñas Arriba*: the peasants are presented with equal care and truth. Before we have arrived at Tablanca, Chisco has been so portrayed that nothing that happens to him will fail to interest us, and all the peasants are similarly distinct, as clearly delineated as is the epical but human figure of Tremontorio in *La Leva* and *El Fin de una Raza*. This accounts for the living dialogue, which ranks worthily with that in the *Novelas Ejemplares* of Cervantes, and is the result of observation rather than of psychological insight, observation of men of character and individuality as compared with the superficial polish produced by civilization in cities.

It sufficed for Pereda to be true to life, his types are not abstract nor idealized, and the Mountain gave him as much as he gave. But where, it may be asked, are his heroines? They must be looked for not among the *marquesas* such as she who gives the title to *La Montálvez*, nor in the strange Clara of *Pedro Sánchez*, the timid Inés of *La Puchera* or the insipid Neluca of *Peñas Arriba*, much less in the grey woman of *Peñas Arriba*, la Galusa of *Pedro Sánchez* or Tia Sargüeta and her daughter (*matre pulchrior*) in *Sotileza*, who as portraits may rank with that of Patricio Rigüelta in *Don Gonzalo* but will scarcely be accepted as heroines, but in the subordinate figures: Carmen, the peasants Pilara or Catalina, and *Sotileza*, the wild flower of the Calle Alta. It is this failure in the portrayal of women that robs his novels of cohesion and unity. Doubtless his ideal of woman was that she should be hidden away in the beneficent activity of her household tasks, but when we penetrate with the

author into the homes we find that he has been very careful that there should be no mistress of the house: the home, in *Peñas Arriba*, *La Puchera* and *Pedro Sánchez*, is that of a widower. Pereda's love of Nature was un-Latin, un-idyllic; but his descriptions of sea and mountains are unrivalled. A single phrase of his splendid prose can illuminate a whole mountain-side: "los verdes remedos de sus brañas y el rojo mate de sus resechos helechales" (*Don Gonzalo*); as it can paint the sea in the immeasurable silence of its sleep: "algunas veces se oía un ligero chasquido no lejos de la barquilla, como el que produciría una pedrezuela arrojada al agua" (*La Puchera*). The account of the storm in *Sotileza* and of the mountain-blizzard in *Peñas Arriba* belong to the immortal pages of literature. For his broad, intense effects, using the axe to Valera's chisel, he seemed to need this background of sea and mountain, and against it he carved out for all time those figures of *un monde qui s'en va*. Pérez Galdós, Pereda's friend and admirer, spoke of his "excessively Spanish and Cervantine character"; those splendid qualities describe the man, and they also describe his literary work.

§ 2. JUAN VALERA AND THE CLASSICAL IDEALIST NOVEL

Although most of his stories belong to Andalucía, JUAN VALERA can only in part be considered as a representative of the regionalist school. The visible world in his work is only secondary. His books are none the worse because it may be difficult to class them. Somewhat vaguely we call them classical; they are idealist in the sense that scenes and characters are drawn, not from direct observation, but through the memory and imagination of the author. They

are realistic to a very limited extent. When Valera, in *Las Ilusiones del Doctor Faustino*, implores his readers to excuse him if he falls into and even wallows in "the most prosaic realism," they are not seriously alarmed: they know that at most they are going to be informed of the precise amount of the hero's income or of the cost of a gallon of wine.

Apart from measuring his novels by the tenets of any school, by which they will perhaps be infallibly condemned, there are two ways of judging them. One may ask oneself what characters stand out from his works: what does one remember of the eponymous heroes Pepita Jiménez, Doña Luz, Juanita la Larga? Or we may reread the books and realize afresh how they interest and fascinate us as we read and are led on from page to page and from novel to novel. Thus Valera, who in his prefaces always repeated that the novelist's business was to give pleasure by a work of art, has the laugh over his critics to the end of the chapter; and if no single event or character remains in the reader's mind, that may be a triumph as well as a defect, as from a collection of Greek sculpture one may take away the impression of certain qualities, harmony, charm, restraint, beauty, rather than any individual memory. After fifty years his works resemble Sixteenth-Century *azulejos*: their pattern, the characters portrayed, may be worn and faint, but the exquisite lustre of their style survives. We are told in *El Comendador Mendoza* that Doña Blanca is *una terrible mujer, tremenda*, and we are willing to believe it; but it is Doña Perfecta whom we remember. Lucía and Clara in the same novel may charm us at the moment, but they are eclipsed afterwards and always in our mind by Marta and María. In *Doña Luz* the heroine declares that she is *muy rara de caracter*, but again it

is Doña Ana Ozores who abides in our memory: Doña Luz is too evidently the creation of Valera's brain, unreal and idealized. The same unreality hangs to a perhaps even greater extent over *Pepita Jiménez* and *Juanita la Larga*, as over the casuistical arguments of *Pasarse de listo*. In *Pepita Jiménez*, the first, the most celebrated and in some ways the most excellent of his novels, the heroine is in fact an abstraction; she is a figure round which the author weaves his philosophy, and exists for the purpose of being clothed in the mystic ornaments borrowed from the great Spanish writers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: "I wished to gather into a bunch all that was most precious or that seemed to me most precious of those mystic and ascetic flowers and I invented a character." In his preface to the ninth edition, Valera used and repeated the daring epithet *bonito* (*ameno* would have been a happier word): *una novela bonita*. "A pretty novel must be poetry, not history, that is, it must paint things not as they are but more beautiful than they are, clothing them in a light which will give them fascination." *Pepita Jiménez* has survived the shock of being described as pretty, it is something more than a graceful lifeless china vase; but certainly its permanent value consists not in the plot, which as in most of Valera's novels is of the weakest, nor in the mystic devotions of Pepita, nor in the gradual humanization of Don Luis de Vargas from his fancied vocation as priest and missionary to become the husband of Pepita; not in the struggle between nature and asceticism, but in the fascination of the style and treatment, its Platonic light that never was on sea or land. It is amusing to find a suspicion in the author's mind here and there that all his characters are a little too like Don Juan Valera. Antoñona "had prayed to Heaven, or perhaps to

Hell, that her tongue might be loosened and that she might speak not in the common and grotesque language of her wont but in a cultivated, elegant style suitable to the noble thoughts and fine things which she thought herself called upon to express." And Juana la Larga says to her daughter: "Ah child, what quillets and refinements! This is the learning Don Pascual has filled your head with. All you say seems to come out of those books he gives you to read." Valera says somewhere that "the novelist knows and hears everything"; with him we seem to be always hearing the novelist, or rather the eclectic philosopher, yet so delicately and gracefully is it done that we do not resent the intrusion. Moreover, Valera, incorrigibly aristocratic, cosmopolitan, diplomatist, epicurean, never lost his love for his native Andalucía. He gives us in his novels a great part of Andalusian reality described with the infinite charm which hangs about that region, the charm which permeates his description of Andalusian country-houses or of the celebration of the night of San Juan or of an Andalusian Spring. In *Juanita la Larga*, Valera's *De mi tierra*, we are to be brought into direct touch with reality, as a preliminary letter informs us: "Were it not that at the present time this kind of novel, an exact copy of reality and not a creation of the poetic spirit, is much in vogue I would consider my book to be worth very little." "My novel may be looked on as a mirror or photographic reproduction of the men and things of my native province." To a certain extent this is true, and we read of a hundred Andalusian dainties and details; the story itself might have become a paler *Sombrero de Tres Picos*; but Valera succeeded in casting a complete air of unreality over the book, and it is very curious to notice how in his *El Pájaro Verde* the tables are turned and a fairy-story becomes completely real.

The reason for this apparent paradox is that here he is drawing, with his usual skill of words, a single definite picture, whereas in his more "realistic" novels he is combining several pictures. *Juanita la Larga* may be a *reproducción fotográfica* but it is a composite photograph. In *Morsamor* he showed how aptly he could combine fancy and reality.

If we regard Valera less as a novelist than as an exquisite essayist, an artist to the finger-tips, a Spanish Landor sipping in sunshine the flowers of literature and philosophy, *Las Ilusiones del Doctor Faustino* will be considered one of his best works. This eclectic philosopher, discreetly pagan, this Greek sophist playing with ideas, this sceptical self-analyser, was fundamentally serious and not, like M. Bergeret, *voltairien dans le secret de son âme*. His mixture of materialism and mysticism, faith and doubt, is mirrored in his contemporary, Don Faustino (born in 1816). And there was emotion beneath his intellectualism and heat behind his subtle irony; but his aim, successfully attained, was that no amount of erudition or emotion should dim the lightness and transparency of his art (the music he most admired was that of Mozart and Bellini). All his scenes and characters suffer in realism but not in attractiveness by being eclectic, made up, like a mosaic, of very various pieces. Villabermeja, he tells us, is a Utopia "made up of traits and details and characteristics of places known to me" and his novels in general contain real events "incrustadas en la mentira o ficción poética." When he wishes to portray a simple figure of the people simply, he cannot do so. *Juanita* is but another Valeran mosaic, and *Respetilla* makes but a poor Sancho. Valera, *el único e incomparable Valera*, stands in a class by himself, but he is well able to support such isolation; his works can never become antiquated nor lose their peculiar charm.

THE NOVEL

§ 3. PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCÓN

A link between the two halves of the Nineteenth Century in Spanish literature is provided by a writer whose unbridled romanticism was united with a vivid and unliterary style. No doubt PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCÓN later rejected the unreal and fantastic story of *El Final de Norma*, published in 1855, when its author was but twenty-two, and written several years earlier; yet *El Niño de la Bola*, which appeared a quarter of a century later, contains elements equally fantastic and far-fetched. *El Niño de la Bola* is now in its fourteenth edition, while Pereda's *Peñas Arriba* is in its seventh; and the fact that Alarcón continues to be read with keenest enjoyment by educated Spaniards testifies to the life which runs through all his work, to the spirit, the *verve* and *brío* (to use two foreign words) with which he can tell a story. It is for his inventive facility, sparkling mercurial temperament and flashes of wit, rather than for style, plot or imagination that his works are read. He is always full of life and movement.

He is thoroughly Spanish, one might almost say thoroughly *madrileño*, although he was born at Guadix in Andalucía and his early taste was formed by reading Walter Scott in translation, Dumas, Victor Hugo, George Sand, Balzac and Alphonse Karr. His vivid, dramatic gift of narration is at its best in the short story, although it makes its presence felt even when weighed down by the impossible melodramatic events of *El Niño de la Bola*, in which the hero, Manuel Venegas, is of such precocious superhumanity in word and deed that even the author is scandalized: "Boy, you are a very demon, answered the priest. You talk like those forbidden books called novels, which, fortunately, have

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

not yet come into your hands." Yet the narrative and dialogue flow so naturally that they deserved a subject less strained and unreal and give one somewhat the impression of an apple-cart being used as a tumbril.

The heavy matter of *La Pródiga* and *El Escándalo* is in like manner carried along by the lively narration. The discussion which surged round the most famous of Alarcón's longer novels was largely of a religious nature and should not be suffered to eclipse the real merits of a work which maintains its place in Spanish literature after the lapse of half a century. Once more the interest is not in the characters, either of Fabián Conde, of Gabriela, by whose influence he is redeemed from a life of dissipation, or of his friend Diego or his spiritual adviser, the Jesuit Padre Manrique, but in the swiftness of the story and the easy dialogue. The same merits belong in some degree to *La Pródiga*, a story of love and politics, in which a parliamentary candidate is captivated by an influential lady *cacique*. The Conservative tendency of the novel, indicating that the author had come to years of discretion, was denounced by critics who persisted in looking upon him as the Radical of his younger days; and indeed it is not easy, in criticizing Alarcón, to adopt an exclusively literary standpoint. *El Capitán Veneno*, a shorter novel published just before *La Pródiga*, which appeared in the year 1882 (the close of his career as a novelist), was and is much more favourably received and displays its author's gift for telling a story, whether the subject be popular or aristocratic.

In his *Cuentos Amatorios* the modern reader is apt to be a trifle wearied by the insistence on the incongruous, strident laughter following on the heels of sentimentality. Yet it would be a mistake to believe that the most celebrated of his stories stands out from the rest of his work completely iso-

lated and alone. He shows himself capable of great suggestive power in *La Comendadora*. The *Narraciones Inverosimiles* are very improbable indeed, but display no depth or splendour of imagination and are often developed in an atmosphere of melodrama, while false touches abound. "And Gil and Death departed, and she remained there standing among the trees her hands crossed and her arms hanging down, motionless, magnificent, interesting, lit by the light of the moon." That "*interesante*" considerably detracts from the reader's interest. But in one of these stories, *Moros y Cristianos*, we get closer to reality, and in the *Historietas Nacionales* even a Frenchman can admire the art and vigour of *El Angel de la Guarda*, and in a still greater degree of *El Carbonero Alcalde*, in which two hundred soldiers of Napoleon are overwhelmed by a handful of villagers in the Alpujarras. The popular subject, its popular and realistic treatment and the comic vein that runs through this brief tale, told when the author was under thirty, prove that the success of *El Sombrero de Tres Picos* owes as much to its skilful presentment by Alarcón as to its traditional theme.

At his best, Alarcón has something of that picaresque directness and of that bubbling humour which cleanses Byron's *Don Juan* of its impurity; but it was his power of identifying himself with figures of the people as displayed in *El Carbonero Alcalde* and *Buena Pesca* of the *Historietas Nacionales*, that stood him in such good stead in dealing with the delicious tale of the miller's wife and the Corregidor. It is this masterpiece of narrative, in which the author eclipses himself objectively, that renders him immortal. In this charming, malicious account of the unrequited, or—should one say?—all too well requited love of a powerful wealthy man for a peasant woman, a popular theme centuries old, we see

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Spanish realism at its best, outspoken, clean and humorous, rapid in action, yet bringing into strong relief every detail and clearly defining every character of the story. ✓

By this indigenous *castizo* sketch of generous, good-humoured, spirited, truly Spanish democracy, Alarcón, much of whose work seems to belong to the Romantic period, is of the sixteenth and twentieth and every century. So true is it that Spanish writers who go to the people, to its traditions and customs, independent manners and courteous dignity, never come away unrewarded. Tío Lucas and Seña Frasquita are as real and living to-day as when the story first appeared fifty years ago, and the Corregidor and his wife and other less prominent or exalted characters all stand out as admirably as the fair buxom Navarrese and her Murcian husband. The scene, a small cathedral-city, or rather a vine-trellised mill a mile beyond its walls, lies in Alarcón's native Andalucía. He himself believed that his fame would rest on *El Escándalo*; but his gift lay not in imagining a plot but in telling a story, and here when the story lay ready to his hand, he so skilfully brought out its dry humour, healthy laughter and clear characterization, and gave it such speed and lightness, without abating one jot of its realism, that *El Sombrero de Tres Picos* is likely to remain fresh and unfading long after *El Escándalo* is forgotten.

§ 4. PÉREZ GALDÓS AND THE NATIONAL NOVEL

Without Pereda's humanity and breadth and strength of character, BENITO PÉREZ GALDÓS, a native of the Canary Islands, was perhaps able to form a more accurate idea of contemporary Spain than the *hidalgo* of the Montaña. He faithfully caught the spirit of the times, and shortly after his

arrival at Madrid in 1864 he had the inspiration to see that the historical novel might be renewed, not archæologically à la Walter Scott, but in the description of contemporary events and customs, as the *novela de costumbres*.

His first novel, *La Fontana de Oro*, although not published until 1870, was written (1867-68), except the last few pages, before the Revolution of 1868. It deals with Madrid in 1821 and already shows the tendency to wrap the characters closely in contemporary history, as does the next novel, *El Audaz*, the action of which lies in Madrid and Toledo at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The youth of twenty-five shows himself in this novel not insensible to the farce that may be enacted in the name of Liberty or to the iniquities of revolutions. In 1873 appeared the first *episodio nacional*, *Trafalgar*, and the next five years were a period of amazing activity, for they included the best, the first twenty National Episodes and some of the most celebrated of the "contemporary novels": *Doña Perfecta*, *Gloria*, *Marianela* and *La Familia de León Roch*. That was a prodigious effort, but his vein of invention was of marvellous fertility (in this respect he ranks with the greatest Spanish writers of all ages), and for the next twenty years contemporary novels flowed unfaillingly from his pen, while in 1898 he took up the National Episodes, interrupted in 1879, and before his death in 1920 had added another twenty-six volumes to the twenty of the first two series.

It was impossible that all should be pure gold in so ample an output, yet there is gold to be found in every one of his books, although few of them are finished into so satisfying a completeness as *Doña Perfecta*, and, on a larger scale, *Fortunata y Jacinta* and *Angel Guerra*. It is usual to class Galdós among the realists, although a good deal of his writ-

ing is not strictly based on reality. In his first period the influence of the Naturalistic school led him into an excessive or one-sided display of details (the description, for instance, of the night watchman of Orbajosa in *Doña Perfecta* shows a determination to look upon one side only: "The Ave María Purísima of the drunken Sereno sounded like a wailing cry in the sleeping town." Later a cloudy symbolism and allegory manifested themselves, and a certain narrowness of outlook is evident throughout, without, however, the defect of insincerity or coldness.

Some critics have supposed Galdós to have been not only influenced by English novelists (chiefly Dickens) but possessed of an English temperament, that of the traditional type of cold and impassive Englishman. Such critics can scarcely have read very deeply in Galdós' voluminous works. We have only to consider the scene of the child's illness in *La Familia de León Roch*, which is one of his great novels, since it is not merely a mordant attack on Madrid society, it is a moving story, human and intense; or his love of children generally, as shown so unmistakably and with delightful delicacy in many novels: Juan Jacobo in *Los Apostólicos*, the most living portrait of Empecinadillo in *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, or the children, like flowers in a hail-storm, who play a prominent part, with such pathos and gaiety, in *Gerona*. We remember, too, the poignant story of Marianela, wild flower of a mining district of Cantabria, and the pathos of *El Abuelo*, or the figure of Sola (akin to Señor Matheu's Eugenia) in *Los Apostólicos*: she is presented with a naturalness and charm which he more often reserves for his child characters. His affectionate chivalry is shown also in humble but loyal figures, such as that of Casiana (thrown on the Madrid streets by her mother at an early age) in *Cánovas*,

which abound in his pages; few writers have so successfully lit up with an inner significance such apparently dull or dingy lives.

Galdós is pre-eminently the novelist of Madrid, where he can find "pictures worthy of the Potro of Córdoba and the Albaicín of Granada," and he had by heart all the changes and development of the life of the capital and court in the Nineteenth Century. If he laid bare some of the foibles of modern Spanish life, the love of talk, unbridled individualism, a positive dislike of reputations (the reputations of others), the ignorance of the women, of those sensible and energetic women whose ascendancy he describes; the illiteracy of the orators, the inclination of even the most honest citizens to defraud the impersonal State, the contempt for manual labour, the regard for things foreign, the frivolous gaiety of the capital, the mingling of penury and ostentation; if he described Spain as lying beatifically asleep, he also paid constant tribute to the exceptional and splendid qualities of the race beneath those superficial defects, and no writer was more fervently patriotic or more national. His books are a treasury of Spanish prose, a perfect mine of familiar phrases. Style was never the principal consideration with him, but on great occasions it never failed him, and his prose is indigenous, completely free from gallicisms. (How few modern writers would distinguish as he does between the adjectives *confortable* and *confortante!*—"confortable humildad," "lechos cómodos y confortantes.") Nothing better than the subtle preciousness of the Modernists shows up the vigour and sanity, the restrained eloquence and *castizo* air of his prose.

Equipped with sound general knowledge, especially in medicine and astronomy, this industrious Spanish Balzac

travelled over Spain observing keenly and filling in his notes with his acute reading of history. The dramatic events of the War of Independence and of the Carlist Wars lose nothing in the telling in the pages of the *Episodios Nacionales*, which carry the history of Spain from the death of Churruca at Trafalgar to the Restoration. With the entry of Alfonso XII into Madrid at the beginning of *Cánovas*, he virtually brings this history of three-quarters of a century to an end, although he carries it on a few years further. Forerunners of the *Episodios Nacionales* may be seen in the Erckmann-Chatrrian novels and in those of Camillo Castello Branco; but the excellence of such a series of works produced almost mechanically, with unflinching persistence, has no precedent. The superiority of the early, the first twenty Episodes over the later twenty-six has often been noticed. Indeed, perhaps the merit of the later books is in danger of being ignored. The private story in these later Episodes is often of slighter interest, but the historical interest remains. Nevertheless, the old power of concentration, characterization and insistence on concrete detail, in a word, the creative vigour, had evidently diminished. The atmosphere becomes vaguer and dimmer, while the characters, so well brought out in the early works, fade into the background, and the story wanders on a little indefinitely, like a tale told by Padre Aleli.

The action of Galdós is impersonal and dramatic, the author keeps himself carefully behind the scene, unless we may see him in the dreams and hallucinations, ravings and disquisitions of his otherwise deliberately commonplace characters. These interludes were perhaps a half-unconscious refuge from the commonplace, devised by this homely, domestic novelist (is not one of his novels entitled *Miau?*) who devoted himself so relentlessly to portrayal of reality, when

reality threatened to rise up in its drabness and materially smother him in bales of cotton and rolls of cloth and yards of lace. Then he would transplant the familiar figures, which charm us as presented in their ordinary life, into a nightmare of difficulties and adventures; Solita, for instance, searching for Monsalud in the Madrid streets during a night of insurrection (*7 de Julio*). So Don Mariano, in *Los Duendes de la Camarilla*, is "sofocado y como delirante"; Lord Gray, in *Cadiz*, is "en el apogeo de su delirio."

Other devices are adopted in order to present the characters as in a dream, ordinary persons in abnormal circumstances: magic, mystery, persecution, doubt, dreams, fever, famine, physical agony, blindness, allegorical figures, strange apparitions. In a passage of *Bailén* it is the moonlight, "disfiguring the things of Earth"; elsewhere the refuge from reality takes the form of asceticism: "There were moments in which he considered himself fortunate to be so unhappy" (*Montes de Oca*). In *Fortunata y Jacinta* he speaks of "certain devices absolutely necessary in order that the commonplace character of life should be converted into material for art." The introduction of the marvellous, which had already appeared in *Angel Guerra* and some of the earlier works, in the later novels is used as a deliberate mechanism to move the characters opportunely but with much needless magic to the vital historical points; but we feel in his work the truth of his earlier remark (in *El Grande Oriente*) that "it sometimes happens that the commonplace things are those most worth relating."

Some of the lucubrations, especially in the later works, are apt to be wearisome: not always can wisdom, as with Don Quixote, flow from the lips of the distraught. But more usually his characters are lifelike, natural and indi-

vidual (the beggars and street urchins as individual as the rest) and are marked with a Dickensian emphasis, although ordinarily without caricature. Especially when the scene is Madrid, the city in which his observation was chiefly exercised, nearly every character is presented with some little trick or habit or physical peculiarity. How deftly these are underlined may be seen, for instance, in *Lo Prohibido*, an account of the relations between a rich bachelor and three sisters (his first cousins) and their husbands. Few indeed are the novelists who have left so wonderful and abundantly stocked a gallery of portraits; in the true Castilian tradition, scenery and description are the mere background for the human figures. The new feature in Galdós is the multitude of these portraits. Instead of a few spinners or toppers or Court buffoons, as with Velazquez, in the pages of Galdós a whole people invades literature and art: tramps, peasants, ploughmen, beggars, street *gamins*, shepherds of the uplands of Castile, priests and chaplains, monks and nuns, soldiers and volunteers, the prosperous bureauerat or woebegone *cesante* (as Villaamil in *Miau*), the charlatan orator, the unprincipled politician, usurers, third-rate poets, schoolmasters (as Don Pedro Polo in *El Doctor Centeno* and *Tormento*: who "taught nothing," or José Ido in *Tormento* and other novels), tutors such as the gentle Don Pío Coronado in *El Abuelo*; doctors, engineers, men of science; the mystic, saintly Nazarín, the democratic nobleman Don Pedro de Belmonte, the ruined aristocrat Conde de Albrit, bigoted Doña Perfecta, noble Léré of the flickering eyelashes; Torquemada, avaricious, brutal, but with a certain pathetic sincerity in his avarice, the old chemist of Alicante (*Tristana*); cross old Doña Cruzita with her beloved dogs and birds (*Los Apostólicos*), Doña Celia and her flower-boxes (*O'Donnell*), the

gourmet Riva Guisando (*O'Donnell*), Don Paco instructing the Condesito in the art of war (*Bailén*).

These are but a few of the hundreds, nay thousands of characters (the *Episodios Nacionales* are said to contain a thousand characters and they swarm equally in the Contemporary Novels) which live, really live memorably in his pages and will keep them alive long after the more or less artificial religious or philosophical problems presented in *Gloria* (that "work written in a fortnight's enthusiasm," as its author described it) and *La Familia de León Roch* and *Doña Perfecta*, or the socialism of *Angel Guerra* and *Halma* have lost their interest. How rapidly he succeeds in interesting us in the apparently insignificant figure of Tilín in *Un Voluntario Realista!* With what zest and glee he portrays the figure, a veritable masterpiece, of the ecclesiastical lawyer Don Felicísimo Carnicero in *Los Apostólicos*, a National Episode which seems to foreshadow the novel *Fortunata y Jacinta!* Galdós can give individual life even to Don Romualdo, the priest who (before Anatole France) had never existed, in the novel or elsewhere (*Misericordia*), and in his anticlericalism can nevertheless distinguish between priest and priest, as in *Angel Guerra* between the archæological enthusiast Canon Palomeque, the smart and fashionable Canon León Pintado, the avaricious Don Francisco Mancebo (who succeeds in economizing although he has to feed eleven mouths on five *pesetas* a day), the timid saintly Don Tomé, the slovenly importunate Don Eleuterio (who had mistaken a passing love of Cicero for a priestly vocation), and the sensible and excellent Don Juan Casado, ugly and outspoken.

And he shows an admirable precision in detail, whether it is of a Toledo or Córdoba *patio* or the account of how a family contrives to make both ends meet. Sometimes he gives a

personal touch to the inanimate: "la mesa que había quedado casi llorando" (*Un Voluntario Realista*); or describes a scene in a few words of concentrated power and even poetry: a Madrid sunset, for instance ("al ponerse el sol aquel magnífico cielo de Occidente se encendía en espléndidas llamas, y después de puesto apagábase con gracia infinita, fundiéndose en las palideces del ópalo" in *Fortunata y Jacinta*); a deserted street, with the "pregón del aguador que va con el burro cargado de botijos" and "el machacar de los herreros" (*Realidad*); a sleepy town ("Solsona continuaba viviendo con aquella serenidad y monotonía que era la delicia de sus canónigos" in *Un Voluntario Realista*); or more elaborate descriptions, as that of a bull-fight in *La Familia de León Roch*, of a *verbena de San Juan* or *romería de San Isidro* (*La Desheredada*) or the Toledo Cigarrales (*Los Apostólicos* and *Angel Guerra*). The scene of Servet's meal in the cell of Sor Teodora de Aransis at midnight shows a concrete inventiveness and delicate realism which would have enchanted Robert Louis Stevenson had he read it.

If we add the living, human, dramatic interest, the historic interest of Episodes such as those of the War of Independence, of which Southey prophesied truly in November 1808 that it would renew "such scenes as have never been witnessed in Europe since the destruction of Saguntum and Numantia"; the keen pathos and humour, the knack of unconventional but satisfactory endings, we may realize the hold maintained on countless readers and many younger writers by the greatest Spanish novelist of the Nineteenth Century after Pereda (whose friend he was and to whose "marvellous art" he paid a tribute in *Gloria*). It was indeed fortunate that he could round off a novel with some concession to the reader's interest in the characters, for in his faithful presentation of life

he was inclined to publish his novels in lengths cut off almost at random, one might say, so that one must read his works entire for a full understanding. The philanthropist Doña Guillermina is mentioned also in *Misericordia*; León Roch appears in *Lo Prohibido* and elsewhere; Torquemada in *Fortunata y Jacinta* as well as in the four novels of his own, and also in *La de Bringas*, which is a continuation of *Tormento*, which is a continuation of *El Doctor Centeno*, which grew out of *Marianela*. *La Incógnita* is continued, with repetitions, in *Realidad*. The Sola of *Los Apostólicos* is the Solita of *7 de Julio*; and generally, moreover, the connecting thread of a single narrator and actor runs through the *Episodios Nacionales*. Rationalism is an inartistic, analytical, dissolvent creed, and many of Galdós' novels are rather bundles of charming shreds and delicious patches than individual works of art. From time to time, however, the wizard could raise and concentrate a whole picture on a large canvas into a living masterpiece, as in *Angel Guerra*, the novel of Toledo (c. 1885), or *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the novel of Madrid (in the last third of the Nineteenth Century).

§ 5. THE REALIST AND NATURALIST SCHOOLS

Literary criticism, essays, books of travel, lectures, plays, poetry, biography, folk-lore, short stories, novels: to excel in all these might more than suffice even for a literary life extending over half a century. But criticism, in lamenting that the Condesa EMILIA PARDO BAZÁN's talent should have dissipated itself in too many directions, has perhaps copied what it condemned and failed to concentrate on the Galician novels and stories or to realize how substantial is this side of her work. When we consider the host of short

stories dealing with her native Coruña and Galicia, *Cuentos de Marineda*, *Cuentos Nuevos*, *Cuentos Regionales*, and the novels *La Tribuna*, *Pascual López*, *La Piedra Angular*, *Memorias de un Solterón*, *Morriña*, *Los Pazos de Ulloa*, *La Madre Naturaleza*, and others which are wholly or in part concerned with Galicia, and the essays of *De mi tierra*, which treat of its literature and scenery, we see how truly it can be said that Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán did for Galicia and La Coruña (Marineda) what Pereda did for the Mountain and Santander and Señor Blasco Ibáñez for Valencia and the Huerta.

Some critics smiled at her weakness for fashions, without perhaps realizing that behind her hankering after novelties, her desire to shine in every field of literature, her craving for applause, lay much steady conservative good sense and not a little humility. She was never sure of her genius, or rather never convinced that it was taking the right direction, never wholly satisfied with what she had accomplished, always ready with abiding energy and unflinching courage to contend and conquer in pastures new. At the end of her life, when the death of Pérez Galdós had left her by common consent at the head of living Spanish novelists, she could say: "I think that I also have achieved something?" She required even then to be assured. She was planning new works, a study of Hernán Cortés, a study of her beloved Shakespeare; a week before her death an article appeared from her pen dealing with the vogue of Sir Rabindranath Tagore.

That she often showed more good sense than her critics is evident from the way in which she dealt with the once "palpitating question" of Naturalism.

It seemed perhaps a little startling that it should be a

THE NOVEL

woman novelist who, with *Un Viaje de Novios*, *Los Pazos de Ulloa* and *La Madre Naturaleza*, introduced into Spain the system which had made Zola's name notorious. We find, however, that both in precept and in practice she followed the new school with many reservations. There is an enviable sanity about a writer who can show so true an appreciation of the old Spanish realism as she does in the preface to *Un Viaje de Novios*: "O how sane, true and fine is our national realism, that most glorious tradition of Spanish art! Our realism, which laughs and weeps in *Celestina* and *Don Quixote*, in the pictures of Velazquez and Goya, in the comic dramatic vein of Tirso and Ramón de la Cruz," and who can doubt whether the French Naturalism then in vogue was "of a legitimate kind or a lasting influence in literature." She condemned "the methodical choice of repulsive and shameless subjects, the excessive and sometimes tedious prolixity in description; and above all a defect which the critics appear to have overlooked: the constant solemnity and sadness and knitted brows, the lack of gaiety and wit and charm both in style and ideas"; and the "cold, assumed shamelessness of Naturalistic writers." (*Un Viaje de Novios*.)

Moreover, the same method would not give the same results in Spain as in France: "Thank Heaven our lowest social strata are very different from those described by the Goncourts and by Zola" (*La Cuestión Palpitante*.) "The people which we who live on this side of the Pyrenees have to copy happily does not as yet resemble that on the other side." (*La Tribuna*). Thus the native Iberian dignity of the people must make Naturalism doubly false in Spain: untrue to life owing to its systematic narrowness, and untrue to its subject-matter even within this narrow field. Señora Pardo Bazán can place Balzac and Daudet, as well as the Goncourts and

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Zola, among the Naturalists, and, in the very work in which she discusses Naturalism, expresses the highest admiration for—Fernán Caballero. Among modern French novelists her admiration was not for Stendhal nor Flaubert nor Zola but for the author of *La Comédie Humaine* and especially for the Goncourts, who are “mis autores predilectos.”

‘The real mark of the Naturalist is that he observes systematically and accurately but in a cold scientific way, without personal interest, and imagines that the notes thus accumulated will interest the reader.’ Some critics consider *La Tribuna* a Naturalistic novel, and in so far as it is a result of what its author in her preface calls “the difficult path of observation,” as in the descriptions of the Coruña tobacco factory or the popular *comadrona*, they may be right; but the greater part of the book is filled with personal reminiscences, a personal interest, and has thus no need for the laboured dissection of the Naturalist: Amparo the *cigarrera* sees what the daughter of the Conde de Pardo Bazán herself saw in her girlhood at La Coruña in the sixties. Certainly there is no shirking of reality here, the observation is careful and acute; but there is a freshness, a human sympathy, a zest and spirit, which separates the work from the Naturalistic school and places it in that of the Spanish regionalist and realistic novel. (Chinto might be thought to owe something to Murgo, and Amparo to owe something to Sotileza, had not *La Tribuna* appeared two years before Pereda’s great novel.)

Even more is this true of *Los Pazos de Ulloa* and its continuation, *La Madre Naturaleza*. Here she is in the heart of Galicia, her personal interest is evident on every page, she is engrossed by the country and its inhabitants, concerned with them more than with her readers. She is, indeed, still very determined not to ignore or gloss over reality, natural facts,

however disagreeable; but she dwells on them, not in any one-sided fashion, but as a necessary part, and only a part, of the truth. The atmosphere in *Los Pazos de Ulloa* is marvellously reproduced, and with her power of telling a story she created a masterpiece, a Galician *Wuthering Heights*. The characters, Nucha and Marcelina, the frank, rough, brutal, good-hearted Marqués (a very rustic marquis), the timid honourable Julián (did not Voltaire assert that men of good principles are cowards?) are living and natural; but what remains indelibly fixed in our minds is the picture as a whole, with the sinister Primitivo Suarez and the spirit of political *caciquismo* in the background. The descriptions, without being overdone, are an important element in the novel and are drawn with the bold convincing strokes of a master hand: a Galician kitchen, a Galician country-house, the Pazo de Limioso, peasants dancing. The primitive and ingenuous charm and sinister atmosphere are maintained in *La Madre Naturaleza*.

Why did not the Condesa Pardo Bazán follow up these triumphs? In the preface to *Los Pazos de Ulloa* she confesses one of the reasons, and that is that she did not possess Pereda's gift and opportunity for peasant dialogue: "In *La Madre Naturaleza* I give free rein to my love of the country, and native descriptions of the soil. I am so fond of the country that my ambition would be to write a novel in which only peasants should figure; but I am prevented by the difficulty of the dialogue, a difficulty so great that even Zola, the daring Zola, is afraid to face it, as I have just read in a newspaper, and in his new book *La Terre* makes them speak not *patois* but French. To genius nothing is impossible, and Zola will surmount the difficulty: but for me, I feel that the vivid, witty, malicious sayings of our peasantry are in-

separable from the ancient Latin forms in which they are uttered, and that a piebald book, half Galician, half Castilian, would be a hideous production, as ugly as the poems, written entirely in Galician and retaining peasant expressions, are beautiful." How often similarly must an English novelist have thought to himself what a masterpiece he could write if he but knew the language of the peasants of certain regions of Europe, in which without this knowledge the historical setting or the scenery could only be an empty shell!

On the other hand, in novels dealing with Madrid society, where the Condesa Pardo Bazán could have reproduced the dialogue with an absolute naturalness not easily attained by other novelists, a powerful reason of another order stayed her hand. In *La Tribuna*, for instance, she found it necessary to protest against the opinion of a critic who considered that "the names of persons very well known in Madrid society may be clearly seen in the characters of *La Quimera*." What she could have achieved had she been less scrupulous in this respect is evident from the malicious, lifelike accounts of visits to country-houses of Galicia in *Los Pazos de Ulloa*. But the greater loss is that she should not have continued to study and reproduce the strange and fascinating atmosphere of Galician peasant life. Her art thus fell between two stools, she felt herself between two fires, at neither of which she could warm her hands; and this perhaps accounts for the amount of energy spent by her in literary criticism and in short stories, for which her virile style and strong effects were less suited than for the novel; at least her stories gain by being of the length of those in her *Novelas Ejemplares*—*novelas*, not *cuentos*. The posthumous collection of *Cuentos de la Tierra*, forming the forty-third volume of her Complete Works, contains a separate story to every five pages, and every story

contains one or more corpses. The effects are sometimes powerful enough, but the book as a whole perhaps too much resembles a shambles; each of the tales required more space.

The Condesa Pardo Bazán's style has been much discussed and in its richness had proved a stumbling-block and an offence to the delicate palates of a younger generation. There is no doubt that she has given the subject much thought and study. She had known what she calls "la lucha con el indómito verbo" (*La Cuestión Palpitante*); and had despaired of attaining the strength and substance of the older writers of Spanish, "that fire, that force and beauty and fervent sympathy" of a Fray Luis de Leon. "Estos moldes se han perdido" (*La Madre Naturaleza*). Her own style, thus laboriously formed, is not without Gallieisms, unnecessary archaisms, bold and not always unwelcome innovations, as, for instance, the use of uncommon plurals, and here and there it gives hospitality to such terrible clipped iniquities as *sanfason* (*Morriña*), *fondan* (*La Quimera*), *guipur*, *nesser* (*Dulee Dueño*), which, with *futbol* and other similar words, have invaded modern Spanish. But in finding a blemish occasionally, the critic should not forget how admirable is that style in its virility, how substantial and succulent; how robustly it can fasten a picture on the mind; how large and splendid is its vocabulary, how forcible and indigenous its phrases. ✓

It is not the delicate pen of a Valera nor the exquisite brush of an El Greco; Emilia Pardo Bazán admired the Gonerourts for their wealth of colour, and she can paint with the fullness and richness of a Rubens. Both words and phrases have a concentrated explosive energy, and their comparisons are daring and full-blooded: *cielo color de panza de burro*, *claveles sangre de toro*. Her style is perhaps at its best

when she is speaking in the first person. The following description of the Pazos de Ulloa is but one of a hundred instances of her power: "Mudaron de rumbo, dirigiéndose al enorme caserón, donde penetraron por la puerta que daba al huerto, y habiendo recorrido el claustro formado por arcadas de sillería, cruzaron varios salones con destartalado mueblaje, sin vidrios en las vidrieras, cuyas descoloridas pinturas maltrataba la humedad, no siendo más clemente la polilla con el maderamen del piso. Pararon en una habitación relativamente chica, con ventana de reja, donde las negras vigas del techo semejaban remotísimas y asombraban la vista grandes estanterías de castaño sin barnizar, que en vez de cristales tenían enrejado de alambre grueso. Decoraba tan tétrica pieza una mesa-escriptorio, y sobre ella un tintero de cuerno, un viejísimo bade de suela, no sé cuantas plumas de ganso y una caja de obleas vacía."

The author of the *Estudio Crítico de las Obras del Padre Feijó* and of the ampler study *San Francisco de Asís* did not obtrude learning into her novels, but signs of a wide culture are everywhere present. Enough has already been said to prove that, despite the alarm and controversies excited by her novels in Spain in the eighties, she never was, nor had any desire to be, a novelist of the Naturalistic, determinist school. Bold, enterprising and energetic, she always maintained a certain restraint and independence in her searchings for a way. *Morriña* showed not only a welcome return to Galicia but a more spiritual outlook than *Insolación* and *El Cisne de Vilamorta*, and this was even more evident in the novels published in the following year, *Una Cristiana* and *La Prueba*. In her later work, *La Sirena Negra*, *La Quimera* (the story of the ambition of a Galician portrait-painter in which Minia, his patroness, represents the novelist) and

Dulce Dueño, the story of St. Catherine and its modern counterpart, she balanced materialism with some degree of mysticism. The "chimera" is the aspiring disquiet of modern minds; the "black siren," whose charm is withstood by Gaspar de Montenegro, is Death. The variety of *La Quimera* contrasts with the unity of *La Sirena Negra*, but in other respects the two novels have much in common. One can understand that these three novels, written with a wealth of culture and experience, should have been dear to their author; for the reader they are full of interesting sidelights, as the artistic criticism in *La Quimera*, the remarks on Andalusians and English in *Dulce Dueño*, even if as novels they leave him cold.

It must not be thought that the Condesa Pardo Bazán had retreated from her former position or abandoned her precepts. Her true aim had always been to see life steadily and whole. (Her best work belongs to the realistic. To this school she wished *Un Viaje de Novios* and the earlier *Pascual López* to be ascribed, although not to "the trans-Pyrenean realism but to our own, the only kind that satisfies me and in which I wish to live and die." Her most lasting successes were achieved, not when she wandered far afield, to Biarritz and Vichy and Paris, in careful observation, but when she wrote with love and intimate knowledge of the country and people of Galicia. The description of a *romería de San Isidro* observed unsympathetically, from outside, in *Insolación*, is really more naturalistic than a perhaps far freer but more intimate and personal description in *Los Pazos de Ulloa*. Both the *cuentos* and the novels of Emilia Pardo Bazán show how arbitrary must be the distinction between novels of the Realist and Naturalist schools in Spain.

Born in the Asturian village of Entralgo, that "lovely or-

chard fertilized by two rivers," Don ARMANDO PALACIO VALDÉS had been writing for twelve years as critic and story-teller when his first novel of lasting success appeared in 1883 under the title of *Marta y María*. This, with *La Hermana San Sulpicio*, *José* and *La Aldea Perdida*, is the work on which his fame will most securely rest. He has been severely criticized for following the Naturalistic school, but although he did not entirely escape from the tendency predominant when he wrote his most celebrated books and the French influence is evident in his work, he is really natural rather than Naturalist, while his Asturian humour is English rather than French.

His defects and hesitations are due less to any literary school than to a native modesty which prevented him from fully realizing that the reader's interest will always be in his characters, especially in his delicious creations of women, and will not require any strange events to heighten it. Thus, in *Marta y María*, set in a background of the author's native Asturias, the humour is simple and irresistible, the dialogue is of unsurpassed naturalness, the characters of Marta and María are so charmingly presented and skilfully contrasted that they hold the reader in a spell; all the more unnecessary will appear the incident of Marta's escape from drowning, after she has thrown herself into the water as needlessly as Demetria in *La Aldea Perdida*, and of María's arrest as an active Carlist. Nevertheless Señor Palacio Valdés is only interested in external events in so far as they bear on his characters: one sees this very clearly if one compares the account of the arrival of the Viaticum in this novel with that in *Peñas Arriba*, where Pereda's interest is rather in the solemn ceremony itself. *José* has been thought to owe something to Pereda's *Sotileza*. Comparisons are dangerous and one finds in Señor Palacio

THE NOVEL

Valdés' little masterpiece neither the idiomatic language nor the regional atmosphere nor the unfailing zest which caused Pereda to identify himself with his characters. José's mother becomes "more and more furious," but she has not the vocabulary for the part, nor does the storm in which José's brother-in-law is drowned nor that in which José escapes give us an intimate impression of the sea such as that derived from the account of the storm in *Sotileza*. But *José* is a story told with so skilful a sense of proportion, so flowing a style and a feeling so deeply human, that it fully deserves its great popularity and its high place among the author's works.

The great difference between Señor Palacio Valdés and the Naturalists is that they as a rule go out of their way to describe impersonally a slice of what they call life, arbitrarily cut off from its surroundings, whereas he found his inspiration in the ordinary life around him, the life which he had himself lived and felt. He is thus more human and natural and presents a truer picture of reality than the one-sided determinist school. He is more of a poet than a scientist, a fact to which his work owes its broader, more personal interest, while he weaves about it his gentle, sad and smiling philosophy, and his humour furnishes it with salt and savour and rescues it from the snares of sentimentalism. His ironic description of human weakness does not interfere with his charming idylls, which have a freshness and serenity that time cannot stale. His sincere humility and retiring disposition are a contrast to the ways of many modern writers, and he has usually successfully resisted that insidious form of advertisement represented by strained and melodramatic effects in an author's work. All his books, varying as they do in interest and merit, bear the stamp of his genius. Its

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

essential traits are insight into feminine character, a sense of humour, a certain savour of the soil, tolerant sympathy and extreme naturalness and ease, both of form and substance.

His masterpiece will perhaps always be considered *La Hermana San Sulpicio*. Like other Asturians before and after him, Señor Palacio Valdés descended from his native mountains with an eager eye for the characteristics marking the inhabitants of the various regions of the Peninsula. In *La Alegría del Capitán Ribot* the scene is Valencia and the atmosphere of Valencia is reproduced delightfully if without any special subtlety. In *La Hermana San Sulpicio* the story of the unsmooth path of true love between Ceferino Sanjurjo and Gloria, the relations and character of the Galician from the heart of Galicia and the merry sensitive charming Andalusian girl are admirably drawn, with many a touch of humour and delicate observation. The other characters, such as the *malagueño*, the *beata* Doña Tula and Don Oscar are also cleverly sketched, the fascinating atmosphere of Seville and Andalucía is reproduced with skill and without exaggeration (despite the inevitable fire-eating Englishman); but the novel's enduring attraction lies in the delightful character of Gloria, full of life and wit and gaiety: "a most lovely Andalusian, full of wit and charm," as she is described in *Riverita*.

Señor Palacio Valdés' style is pure, fluent (requiring a novel of moderate length rather than a short story), pleasant and natural, without any artifices or deliberate wealth of idiom. He would probably say that the best style of a novelist is to have none. His heroines thus stand out without effort in charming naturalness from his background of careless, easy prose and limited vocabulary. Foremost among them are Marta and María and Gloria; but Lalita in *La Hija de Natalia* proves that the hand that created them has not

lost its cunning. Elena and Clara of *Tristán o el Pesimismo* linger in the memory when Tristán is forgotten. Cecilia and Ventura interest us more than the dramatic events of *El Cuarto Poder*, a novel with an Asturian setting; the timid Maximina and the more mercurial Julia gives to *Maximina* an attraction which its first part, *Riverita*, lacks; the character of Obdulia lends whatever interest attaches to *La Fe*; and in the Andalusian story *Los Majos de Cadiz* our attention is fixed more by Soledad than by Velazquez, the *majo* whom she tames.

We scarcely, indeed, remember a single one of Señor Palacio Valdés' characters of men. His art is essentially domestic; he is thoroughly at home in the provincial *tertulia* of Doña Gertrudis in *Marta y María* or Doña Anita in *Riverita* or the Condesa de Onís in *El Maestrante*. His humour varies from subtle to burlesque and is occasionally irresistible; and if there is unreality about some of the scenes of *El Maestrante* and other novels, the characters of his girl heroines are admirably real and true to life. His love of Nature is genuine, but more human and limited, more social, as it were, than that of Pereda.

The following passage is characteristic of his familiar domesticated presentation of Nature as well as of the liquid, washed colours of his style, recalling the brush of a Tiepolo: "Una nublecilla arrebolada, nadando por el cielo azul, vino a besarla y después de darle largo y prolongado beso siguió más alegre su marcha. Los pimpanos de la parra, sacudidos por la brisa, azotaron suavemente el rostro de Demetria. Un mirlo de corazón osado saltó de la higuera más próxima a la baranda del comedor, miró descaradamente a la niña ladando repetidamente la cabeza, tuvo manifiestas intenciones de dar un picotazo en sus mejillas, pensando con razón que

eran más frescas y más dulces que la cereza que acababa de comerse.”

Two novels, *Espuma* and *La Fe*, stand somewhat apart from the rest, and, although marked here and there by the author's charm and humour, lack the lightness of touch and indigenous flavour of his best work. Usually Señor Palacio Valdés has succeeded in being himself, and he is so in his later books, *Los Papeles del Doctor Angélico*, *Años de Juventud del Doctor Angélico* and *La Hija de Natalia*, in which, in the person of the middle-aged Dr. Angelo Jiménez, he looks out on life and men with a more mature wisdom, a more attic humour and an indulgent philosophy, a *sereine et souriante désolation*; while in *La Novela de un Novelista* he recalls with delicacy and humour his early years in a typical Asturian village and at Avilés and Oviedo.

The novelist had really bidden farewell to his native province in the idyllic scenes of *La Aldea Perdida*, with its deep lanes and meadows, its dance and song and Homeric combats between peasants of rival villages, Progress taking the part of villain, as Politics in Pereda's *Don Gonzalo*. With that unflinching youth which is the mainspring of his genius, he in old age underwent the fascination of Castile, which became his second home. The air of *hostilidad* noted in *La Hermana San Sulpicio* yields before his own sympathetic appreciation. For Tristán, although Castile has its “momentos tan dulces, tan espléndidos,” Madrid is still “the most wearisome, prosaic, commonplace city,” “a large village, not a capital”; for Dr. Angélico it is a city full of charm. But despite the surprising vitality of the novel of his old age, *La Hija de Natalia*, we turn back with ever-renewed zest to his Asturian scenes and characters and to those novels in which he so successfully caught and conveyed the living

charm of Andalucía. He is the most translated Spanish novelist, and the Spanish novelist who loses least by translation. Happily in his case this does not mean that he is un-Spanish but that the interest of his novels lies less in their style than in their characters and skilful construction.

LEOPOLDO ALAS, Professor of Law at Oviedo, in his native Asturias (for by birth he was Asturian although born at Zamora, and possessed an Asturian's humour and psychological insight) was honoured and feared by his contemporaries chiefly as a penetrating if not impartial literary critic; the *solos*, *folletos* and *paliques* of *Clarín* were delicious literary essays in which even their victims could acknowledge the effect of their author's incisive wit. Severe and stimulating to thought, occasionally pitiless, his influence in forming the "Generation of 1898" was considerable. He evidently did not confine his critical faculty to others but exercised it also on himself, so that he progressed from a Krausista to one of the most satirical critics of the followers of Sanz del Río, and as a novelist developed from a naturalist into an idealist.

In his early work he was the Spanish writer who paid most devoted homage to the Naturalistic school, but at the same time he consistently maintained a certain dignified restraint. Although he was always a great admirer of Zola, it is rather Flaubert who would seem to have been his master in his great novel *La Regenta*, which with *Su Único Hijo*, published five or six years later, represents his work as a novelist. In the stories of *El Gallo de Sócrates*, which appeared in the year of his death, he pays tribute to idealism in philosophy and art. *La Regenta* is a novel of over 1100 pages, yet the story can hardly be said to be diffuse or unduly prolonged; *Clarín* in some of his remarkable short stories

proved his power of concentration, and there are brief sentences in *La Regenta* which sum up in themselves a wealth of thought and observation. This novel's immortality is assured not only by the keen and subtle irony with which he observes the life of the provincial city of Oviedo (disguised as *Vetusta*), but by the unfailing skill and unfaltering sureness with which he presents his characters, and the many deft and delicate touches by which scenes and characters are thrown into relief. Take the following scene between the protagonists, the Magistral of the Cathedral, Don Fermín de Pas, passionate, able and domineering, and the Regent, Doña Ana Ozores, so frail and malleable in the pseudo-mysticism with which she beguiled her discontent: "A gust of cold air caused the Regenta to tremble and whirled the withered leaves about the door of the pavilion. The Magistral jumped up as if he had been hit and said in a frightened voice: 'Caramba! It must be very late. We have been talking an unconscionable time.' He would not care for Don Victor to find them at so late an hour in the garden, alone inside the pavilion by the light of the stars. But he refrained from putting his thoughts into words. He came out of the clump of trees speaking loud, but not very loud, pretending not to fear being heard but fearing it. Ana came out after him, wrapped in her thoughts, oblivious of the very existence of husbands and days and nights and hours and places unsuited for solitary talk with a young handsome robust man, priest though he was. The Magistral, as if mistaking the way, turned towards the door of the *patio*, although it would have been the more natural course to go up the stairs leading to the gallery and past Quintanar's rooms. In the *patio* stood Petra, like a sentinel, on the very spot where she had admitted the priest into the house. 'Has the Señor come in?' asked

the Regenta. 'Yes, Señora, answered the maid in a low voice; 'he is in his study.' 'Would you care to see him?' said Ana, turning to the Magistral. 'With much pleasure,' answered the Magistral. 'They dissemble in my presence,' thought Petra angrily. 'With much pleasure, were it not so late. I ought to have been in the Bishop's palace at eight and it is nearly half-past. Please do you give my respects to your husband.' 'As you please.' 'Besides he will be deep in his studies and I do not wish to interrupt him; I will go out this way. Goodnight, Señora; goodnight to you.' 'They dissemble,' thought Petra again as she opened the door leading into the porch." One is inclined to see here as much of Stendhal as of Flaubert. In such touches as "So long as the girl hovered between life and death, Doña Anuncia found her conduct irreproachable," one hesitates between the influence of the author of *Madame Bovary* and that of the author of *La Chartreuse de Parme*.

Clarín's style is pure, smooth, expressive, without rigidity and without energetic, indigenous phrases. The story of *La Regenta*, long-drawn-out as it is, never drags, because of its powerful characterization, which is as carefully executed in all the minor characters as in the protagonists. The whole chapter of Vetusta Cathedral is drawn with the malicious eye of the anticlerical who, writing before his ideas had fully matured—for it is well to remember that this celebrated book was the work of a man of thirty—brought a keenly satirical sense to bear on the weak and saintly bishop, the envious Archdeacon Gloucester, the old scholarly Archpriest Don Cayetano and the prosperous *parvenu* Don Fermín; Ana Ozores' aristocratic aunts, her husband the worthy, excellent, gifted Don Victor Quintanar, wrapped up in his studies and his cult of Calderón until at last he comes

to figure as himself an actor in a modernized version of a Calderón play; his friend the faithful Frigilis, most persistent in the chase, the archæologist Don Saturnino, the fashionable Don Alvaro Mesía, Visitación, the widow Obdulia, the servant girl Petra; these and a score of other characters are all boldly and consistently portrayed. The portrait of the Magistral's mother Doña Paula is in itself a masterpiece.

As to Ana herself, for all her virtues, misfortunes and beauty, she fails, like Anna Karenine, to hold the reader's interest and sympathy, at least sympathy of any depth. The weakness of the book as a whole is that, sustained as is the interest, the reader feels interest only, his mind is pricked to attention, his heart is not touched. His affection is not for Doña Ana, nor for Don Fermín nor Don Alvaro nor Don Victor. At most he experiences a secret leaning towards the maternally unscrupulous and inexorable Doña Paula and the cold-mannered, warm-hearted Frigilis. These two characters, however, important as they are, do not take the most prominent or active part in the story, and thus the reader is left without any scope for alternations of hope and fear in following the fortunes of the heroes of this novel, and it loses consequently in dramatic force. True to life in not making any of his characters melodramatically perfect in good or evil, alas was false to life in not presenting one or other of them as excelling the rest in power of attracting and enchaining sympathy and affection. The effect was of course perfectly deliberate. It is the novel of an intellectual, a philosopher, a self-critic and a critic of others.

Its interest is poignantly and powerfully maintained to the very end, when Don Victor is finally awakened to face reality and finds that between life and the stage there is a difference: "Kill her! It was easily said; but to kill her! Bah,

bah, the playwrights [his favourite authors] kill without a moment's hesitation, as do the poets, because they do not really kill; but an honest man, a Christian does not kill thus." Don Fermín, unable himself to take vengeance, proceeds to incite Don Victor, and the ghost of the latter's affection for Calderón seems to stand laughing behind the scene: "In the name of the Crucified, Don Victor, what has happened here?" inquires the Magistral; "Nothing, but there is yet time," answered the outraged husband. But he does not kill Ana; he fights a duel with Alvaro Mesía and is killed. Ana is left to the care of the loyal Frigilis. Even now our sympathy for her is not vitally aroused, for, however sincere, she seems somehow incapable of coming fully to life.

The last scene occurs in the cathedral of Vetusta. Doña Ana is waiting to confess, and the Magistral is beckoning forward one *beata* after another in rapid succession: "The *beata* before the confessional continued to mumble of her sins. The Magistral heard her not, he only heard the fierce passion crying aloud in his heart." Then they are left alone; but Doña Ana waits in vain: "The confessional remained silent. No hand appeared; the wood had ceased its creaking." One feels that the end of the novel would have gained in impressiveness had it come here, with the suggestion of Ana's sorrow and the Magistral's passion and renunciation; but *Clarín's* art was not of suggestion: he was ever prone to elinch a matter definitely and unmistakably. The Magistral comes from the confessional and if he still has the will sufficient to renounce, it is "by digging his nails into his neck," while Doña Ana is insulted and humiliated. The book is undoubtedly one of the great novels of the Nineteenth Century; it might have been greater had its author given less attention to literary theories. As it stands, his masterpiece is

only potentially Tolstoian, for it lacks the more spacious inspiration of the true idealist, who can be realistic without ceasing to be spiritual, whereas materialism hangs like a millstone round the necks of Doña Ana and the Magistral. Some critics have placed the Jesuit Padre LUIS COLOMA'S name among those of the great Spanish novelists of the Nineteenth Century. The fact that he may be considered as the author of a single novel, *Pequeñeces*, must not prejudice us against him, since the scandal provoked by this book interfered with his literary career, and when he published a second novel, *Boy*, in 1910, he was bordering on sixty. The fact is that, absurd as it might seem to call an author of forty a writer of promise, as *Clarín* called the author of *Pequeñeces*, this was precisely what he was: a writer from whom much might be expected, but who in this novel, with a gift for observation and keen satire, resulting in some vivid and effective scenes, displays to some extent a prentice hand in the matter of construction and in a tendency to caricature in the portrayal of character, although the central figures are drawn with psychological insight, which contrasts, perhaps purposely, with the more superficial presentment of the less essential personages and such sketches as those of the English governess and knight and coachman.

The interest centres round Currita Albornoz, cynical, perfidious and intriguing, under a mask of ingenuous candour which conceals wheel within wheel of duplicity. Like Milton's Satan, she is far more interesting than the virtuous Marquesa de Villasis or the saintly Marquesa de Sabadell, who, one feels, are merely introduced as foils to the villainous. With her husband, the ridiculous and foolish Fernando, Currita represents the degenerate Madrid aristocracy, amid a crowd of equally frivolous and unscrupulous members of

THE NOVEL

society, conspirators, inept ministers and inflated diplomats, in the last days of the reign of King Amadeo and the first year of the Restoration. The time of the story is thus not twenty years previous to the date of its publication, and it was small wonder that aristocratic readers vied with one another in applying the key to its characters and episodes. The author's purpose was a moral one and not primarily artistic, although the moralizing in the novel is not too obtrusive. His satirical wit plays over Currita and her friends and is impartial, embracing meddling *beatas* as well as peccant countesses. The story is rapid and animated. It is perhaps a little too lifelike or photographic, and in seizing all the details does not omit those which are only of a passing or fashionable interest. *Una linda acuarela de Worms; un gabán de mackintosh; un piano Erard; cerveza de Bass; galletas de Huntley*, are instances of the insistence on exactness at the expense of art. The style in the same way is spoilt by a continual use of foreign words, such as *bouquet, mailcoach, guetapens*; in six lines we have *sportman* [*sic*], *muscadin, soubrette, lorettes, handicap, champagne, foie gras*. (At least there is no attempt to disguise them as Spanish words, although the form *fular* appears as well as *foulard*.) These are signs of a cosmopolitanism which is the very reverse of universality. Yet the novel, the scene of which is laid in Madrid, with excursions to Paris, Guipúzcoa and Biarritz, has not grown old; it retains its constant band of readers and appeared in a twelfth edition in 1920.

While Valera was playing with realism, a younger writer, JACINTO OCTAVIO PICÓN, went much further and introduced naturalism into his novels to a greater extent than any previous Spanish writer. His prose is, however, always so delicately academic as to cast a certain air of unreality even

over sordid details. He had evidently taken Valera as his master, and in choosing for his model an author who was a great prose-writer rather than a great novelist, he perhaps betrayed the fact that his own gifts were not primarily those of a novelist. One will not deny psychological insight to the author of *Juanita Tenorio*, and one may rejoice in his precision of detail and in his concise, pithy, sometimes almost epigrammatic style (such touches, for instance, as the following: "he did him every possible kindness, and carrying his amiability to inconceivable lengths, on being asked for a glass of water, ordered it to be served with an *azucarillo*" (*Juan Vulgar*), or "and she, striving to conceal her joy, achieved seriousness" (*Dulce y Sabrosa*). But he had not the power to move his readers, or himself take more than a cold, intellectual interest in his heroes and heroines, and his plots are scarcely sufficient for a long novel. Like Valera, he is careful to emphasize the fact that he writes novels to please rather than to instruct: *Dulce y Sabrosa*, he says, is to be received "not as a novel that incites to thought but as a novelizing toy, an antidote to boredom and pastime in hours of weariness."

He is perhaps at his best in his short stories, to which his early works, *Lázaro*, which he called a *casi novela*, and *Juan Vulgar* really belong. One of his best-known works, *Dulce y Sabrosa*, the study of a refined Don Juan, Don Juan Todelas, who meets his match in his last victim, Cristeta, would have furnished perhaps a better subject for a play than for a novel. It would be interesting to compare this work with Señor Matheu's *Jaque a la Reina*. Its palpable improbabilities are veiled to some extent because the whole book is felt to be rather an intellectual exercise than a piece of reality. Nevertheless there is charm in the portrait of Cristeta and humour in the account of old Don Quintín and his for-

midable spouse Doña Frasquita. One notices that the description of the latter is reserved for the psychological moment, towards the end of the book, when she surprises her husband in an infidelity: "She was tall and thin, bearded and bony, almost without breasts or thighs; a terrible figure with gestures ridiculously tragie." Picón retained Valera's special form of realism (he is careful, for example, to tell us the exact income [11,500 *reales*] possessed by Juan Vulgar), but it was perhaps a disadvantage that he was born at Madrid, not in Andaluéa, and, exact and interesting as are his sober descriptions of Madrid and the street life of the capital, they cannot occupy the important place in his work corresponding to those of Andaluéa in the pages of Valera.

Madrid is the scene of all his novels; and he has an eye for characteristic effects. He gives us descriptions which show that he might have written regional novels of a high order had he been a provincial. We see the "bell-towers and weather-cocks, the red-hued masses and broken lines of the neighbouring roofs, and over all the radiant sky of splendid light" (*Dulce y Sabrosa*); "the great dark and angular masses of walls and roofs; standing out above them the outlines of the towers, whose pointed steeples, roofed with tiles, caught the faint star-light; here and there the black surface of the house-fronts was broken by rectangular spaces of yellow light from balcony windows or a pane lit by the solitary gleam of a lamp with coloured shade" (*Juanita Tenorio*). "It was not yet nine o'clock, and the only persons in the streets were cooks, basket on arm, soldiers, orderlies, porters, shopboys and watermen. At a corner, seated before a small zinc-covered table covered with cakes and pastry, a woman selling fritters sat wrapped in a plaid, counting with her eyes, so as not to expose her hands, a few pennies that lay scattered among the

soft sugar; by her side at another, taller table, on which stood a gigantic coffee-pot, was a seller of hot coffee at a penny the cup, green mittens on his hands and a large comforter round his neck, in conversation with three or four servant-girls and a pair of policemen. The bells of San Sebastian's church and of the oratory of the Olivar were ringing slowly, and towards the entrance of both churches several old women were advancing and a priest or two, slovenly and unshaven" (*Juan Vulgar*).

Lázaro is brought up by his uncle, a worldly bishop (his father sacrifices himself for the sake of his son's career and remains completely alone in their village), and when little more than a boy becomes chaplain to the Duke and Duchess of Algalia at Madrid. This town cousin of Julián of *Los Pazos de Ulloa* falls in love with their daughter Josefina, but renounces his post and his priest's vocation and sets out for his native village. On the way home, however, he meets a band of convicts, and the sight of them causes him to turn his horse's head citywards again in order to spend himself in the service of his fellow men. There is much that is artificial here as well as a gift for observation which appears more clearly in *Juan Vulgar*, an able, ironical study of the son of Andalusian peasant proprietors as student at Madrid ("how much talent they wasted, resting their elbows on a café table!") and later as a subordinate official. It was Picón's originality to combine naturalism with a scholar's delicate, accurate style. He has a nicety in words; we notice, for instance, the use of *azulejo* meaning not a glazed brick but the cyanic flower *aciano*, and of *combro* (really the Latin *cumulus*). There is a wealth of difference between *procuró estar séria* and the vague imperfections usually lavished by Nat-

uralistic writers. (One may compare the passages given above with descriptive passages in *Arroz y Tartana*.)

Picón's work was at least artistically clean; he used a chisel, not a wooden spoon nor a pitchfork, although his material was not always, like that of Valera, pure Pentelic marble. It was in many ways a curious mixture, this of the scholarly academician of advanced views, the revolutionary in professorial garb, the Naturalistic novelist with a persistently self-conscious art. Towards the end of his life he wrote, with a positive tinge of regret for his missed opportunities: "To-day our daring of yesterday may appear timid. I wished to be one of those who in studying the past and observing the present prepare the future in all hopefulness." "Whatever your verdict," he remarked in the same preface, "do me the justice to recognize two things: first, that I have sought to understand and practise the art of literature from the point of view of the Spanish temperament, more given to reproduce natural events than to imagine unreal ones: it was never my aim to make you dream, but only to make you feel; secondly, that I am one of those who are passionately devoted to the beautiful and magnificent Castilian language." Perhaps Picón's realism was not always as real as he imagined, but his quiet humour and restrained style might well cover a multitude of sins. He devoted much of his time to artistic criticism, and his *Vida y Obras de Don Diego Velazquez* appeared in 1899.

It was scarcely to be expected that a perverted taste requiring sensational characters and extraordinary incidents should fix its attention on the retiring, unostentatious work of Don JOSÉ MARÍA MATHEU, an independent Aragonese who does not appear ever actively to have wooed the public favour.

But Rubén Darío spoke of his "small but well tended garden" and more recently Azorín has referred to the fascination of his work, so undeservedly neglected. His appeal is, like that of Stendhal, to the happy few, and, the attraction of his work will probably increase with the years. Although the scene of his most important and longest novel, *Jaque a la Reina*, is Madrid, he is primarily a regional writer, and in the stories of *La Casa y la Calle*, in *Un Rincón del Paraíso*, *La Hermanita Comino* and *El Pedroso y el Templao* he delineates the customs and character of his native Aragon.

Un Rincón del Paraíso, described as a "simple Aragonese tale," is in fact an unpretentious story of Zaragoza told at third hand; yet somehow in a few words it gives a series of intimate pictures; "incorrect pages" possibly, but filled with concealed art. We are left with a delicious impression of the cathedral, the *sereno*, the mother and daughter at their work, the *huerta* just outside the city in a summer sunset or on a cloudless June morning: "Mi padre, que era gran madrugador, había desaparecido de casa a la hora que yo me ponía en pie, entre seis y siete de la mañana. En estas hermosas mañanas de Junio, al llegar los domingos solía él ir a misa y luego se pasaba a una huerta que teníamos fuera de puertas, a unos ochocientos pasos de la población. En ocasiones traía él mismo los alberges, las cerezas, las guindas, los abugos, los cascabelillos, la fruta ya madura elegida por su mano." We seem to see the early sunlight resting on the laden fruit-trees in their motionless expectancy of the coming heat. Or take the following even slighter description: "uno de los jornaleros que van con talegas a recoger las primeras aceitunas que se caen al suelo reparó en el claro de un olivar . . ." That again raises a definite picture in the mind and certainly conceals much art behind its apparent simplicity.

The eponymous heroes of *El Pedroso y el Templao* are two Aragonese masons, one of whom ends by killing the other in a rustic duel. There is no proof of the crime, but the son of the murdered man, when he grows up, vows vengeance and goes off to look for the assassin, now become a market gardener, only to fall in love with his daughter. There is nothing extraordinary about the plot; scenes and characters are taken deliberately from daily life, but it is the author's triumph that he renders them unforgettable. The account of the masons at work or invited to a melon feast in the garden of a friend outside the town, of the havoc wrought by an avenging hand at night among the beans and melons and red pimentos of Señor Pascual (who is el Pedroso), the relations between the wives of the rival masons, Orosia and Juana, are examples of the flavour, at once charming and pungent, which pervades the story. Its exquisite observation is accompanied by humour and recorded with pithiness, restraint and precision. Señor Matheu has a special gift for bestowing fascination upon the commonplace; others may sing of Troy town or the Lady of Tripoli: he will immortalize a plot of melons. "Al otro día levantándose muy de madrugada y recorriendo los plantíos, distinguió desde el mismo andador el destrozo llevado a cabo en un pequeño melonar que tenía a la izquierda de la entrada, muy lozano y verdegueante todavía. Procedía de semilla valenciana y habían salido inmejorables por su finura, por su buen gusto y su colorcillo de un verde amarillento." And such themes, when thus thrown into the required relief with concrete details and perfect naturalness, and without a touch of undue emphasis or exaggeration, have a high and permanent place in art.

The interest of Señor Matheu's work is not in the plot but in the characters, and the plot and incidental descriptions are

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

merely such as draw out the full flavour of characters of everyday life depicted with a sure and delicate hand. His clear, simple but well-seasoned and savoury narrative resembles that wine of which he speaks: "an old dry wine of Arganda, pleasant to the taste." His style is pure and idiomatic, if occasionally careless in the construction of the sentences, a carelessness in consonance with his unpretending simplicity. It has individuality and charm and may possibly be read with pleasure when other more obstreperous writers have sunk into oblivion. One sometimes fancies that his quiet art may have been suggested by Alarcón's *El Libro Talonario*, which seems a Matheu tale before Matheu, transplanted to Andalucía. The characters in *Jaque a la Reina*, Boronat, banker, member of the Madrid Stock Exchange, his cousin the capable, fair-spoken but scheming, acid and implacable Manuela, the charming gentle Eugenia, are most naturally and admirably brought out, as is that of a crowd of their relations and acquaintances, who abide imprinted on the memory. Although one may prefer his Aragonese regional work, *Jaque a la Reina* is undoubtedly his greatest novel and deserves to rank among the best Spanish novels written in the Nineteenth Century.

Señor Matheu belongs to the Spanish Naturalistic school tempered by regionalism. In his careful skill in character-drawing he is perhaps old-fashioned, but in his fastidiousness and art of suggestion he might almost be called a Modernist, and some twenty years before *La Voluntad* he spoke of "the curiosity of the spectators, who wish to see the very end of all the characters that appear upon the scene, although life, in its ordinary development, rarely offers swift and satisfactory solutions, as those in plays, with plot, problem and *dénouement*" (*Un Rincón del Paraiso*). His own work is

extremely natural, but his precise style and a restraint which is selection prevent it from ever becoming common even in the description of the commonest scenes. It is this natural distinction which excludes him, as many other Spanish writers, from the Naturalistic school.

RICARDO MACÍAS PICAVEA, author of *El Problema Nacional* (1899), takes rank among the regional novelists by virtue of his *Tierra de Campos* (1898, 1899). In Galicia, while poetry has been composed mainly in Galician, the prose-writers have as a rule preferred Castilian. Emilia Pardo Bazán did so of necessity, acknowledging it as a weakness in her art; with Señor Valle-Inclán it has been a source of strength, for his peasants could scarcely have been presented more naturally even had they used their own Galician tongue.

Among other Galician novelists who have used Spanish, a conspicuous place is held by the mordant satirist Don WENCESLAO FERNÁNDEZ FLÓREZ, author of the *ensayos de humorismo* entitled *El Espejo Irónico* (1921). The scene of his curious and original novel *Volvoreta* is laid in the *gándara* country a few miles south of La Coruña; that of *Ha entrado un ladrón* is first Madrid, then the *marinas* near the capital of Galicia. Señor Fernández Flórez combines the subtle *afán analítico* of the Galician with a delicious humour. For him there is no attraction in "the gloomy, yellow land of Castile, which cannot be made beautiful by all the torrent of literature which is poured continually over its nakedness"; but since he is still young, we need not despair of seeing the beauty of Castile, slow in its unveiling, absorb him as it has absorbed other contumacious provincials.

Don JAIME SOLÁ, in *El Alma de la Aldea*, *Anduriña*, *El Otro Mundo* and *Ramo Cativo*, has written of Vigo and the

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Ría de Arosa and the Ribadavia wine-country with intimate knowledge and local colour. In *La Casa de la Troya* (1915) Don ALEJANDRO PÉREZ LUGÍN composed an ingenious picture of university life at Santiago de Compostela. It is the story of a Madrid student sent against his will to Santiago, who gradually falls in love with the town and Galicia and the charming Carmen. Although it is written in Spanish, its mixture of wit and satire is Galician rather than Castilian, and it perhaps owes something to the Portuguese novelist Eça de Queiroz. Don FRANCISCO CAMBA takes a prominent place among the younger Galician novelists with *La Revolución de Laiño* (1921) and *El Pecado de San Jesusito* (1924). Don JOSÉ MAS has industriously studied Seville life in *Soledad* (1915), *La Estrella de la Giralda* (1918) and other stories.

Born in 1867, VICENTE BLASCO IBÁÑEZ made his appearance in Spanish literature midway between the Generation of 1868, that is the novelists who, like Pérez Galdós and Emilia Pardo Bazán, began to write at the time of the Revolution, and the Generation of 1898. In his youth the success of the novels of Zola and Victor Hugo was at its height, and the young Valencian was thus won over to the Naturalistic school. His early life was a long battle, and his energy, persistence and industry soon made themselves felt. It is this consuming energy and vitality that we admire in his work, even when later he tended to abandon literature for advertisement. He is the best-known and most successful of living Spanish novelists, and his success was fairly won by hardship and hard work such as few writers would care to undergo. One has to distinguish in his work between the novels in which the author evidently had a living personal interest and Naturalism assumed a regional garb, and those in

which his business has been exclusively a work of cold observation, laborious for himself and perhaps wearisome to his readers.

His early work centred in the atmosphere of his native Valencia; in the city of Valencia in *Arroz y Tartana*, in the fertile Huerta in *La Barraca* and *Entre Naranjos*, the sea-coast and smuggling in *Flor de Mayo*, or the Albufera in *Cañas y Barro*. These novels, with the exception perhaps of the first, *Arroz y Tartana* (somewhat overburdened with insignificant detail accumulated in dutiful imitation of the Zola school), have life and unity. Especially is this the case with *La Barraca* and *Cañas y Barro*, in which, together with the soil and peasant customs, the character of a Batiste, a Pimentó or a Tonet is admirably and intensely drawn. The author, having an intimate lifelong knowledge of this region, is here no merely scientific compiler. Two of his later works, *Los Muertos mandan*, a powerful and attractive story of the Balearic Islands, and *Mare Nostrum*, a novel of the Mediterranean, owe their chief value to this local atmosphere. Apart from this, the interest of his work lies in the energy and concentration with which he can reproduce his own strenuous life struggle in that of the painter Renovales in *La Maja Desnuda*, of the bullfighter in *Sangre y Arena*; an intense power which can find happy expression in describing the *gaucho* in *Los Cuatro Jinetes del Apocalipsis* and in *El Préstamo de la Difunta*. This figure of the *gaucho* is one of the few individual figures that stand out from Señor Blasco Ibáñez' later work; one may compare it with the phenomenal English duchess of *El Préstamo de la Difunta*, who is so far from being alive that she is obviously constructed out of commonplace press-cuttings.

The fact is that Señor Blasco Ibáñez has an overwhelming

personality but little imagination. When he is describing his personal experience of Valencia and the *pampas* of the Argentine, he achieves an intense and finished picture, despite the perhaps deliberate carelessness of the style. Often he has been too intent on a thesis to be artistic. A certain didacticism runs through his work, and his republican and anti-clerical convictions intrude. When he goes outside present-day Valencia, to the archæological reconstruction of Saguntum (Murviedro or Sagunto) in *Sónnica la Cortesana*, to description of Toledo Cathedral and all its devizens, including the anarchist, atheist Gabriel Luna in *La Catedral*; to the Bilbao mining industry in *El Intruso*; to Jerez and the making of wine in *La Bodega*; to the picturesque and sordid populace of Madrid in *La Horda*; or again to a detailed description of a voyage in a steamer from Lisbon to Buenos Aires in *Los Argonautas* (this book, scarcely novel, of six hundred closely printed pages was to be the mere introduction to a series of novels on the Argentine, of which *La Tierra de Todos* was subsequently published), or to gambling at Monte Carlo in *Los Enemigos de la Mujer*, we can only admire the author's prodigious industry while we lament that these works fail to hold the reader, who prefers to derive exact knowledge from other sources and looks to the novelist for characters and life rather than for statistics, or socialist and revolutionary propaganda.

It must be admitted that the production of this second phase, of the ten years from 1914, has added little to the literary merit of Señor Blasco Ibáñez' work, although it has vastly extended his reputation. His really valuable and remarkable work is contained in the first ten years of his literary activity, from 1894 to 1903, and in the novels of 1906-1909: *La Maja Desnuda*, *Sangre y Arena* and *Los Muertos*

mandan. But Señor Blasco Ibáñez, who was thought to have ceased writing after 1909, has amazed the world by the extraordinary wealth of his output during and since the war; he is fertile in surprises and he may yet in his maturity succeed in recapturing himself, extricating himself from the cosmopolitan, cinematographic wave of inartistic chaos that has temporarily overwhelmed him, and may once more concentrate his talent and give us more than one powerful sketch of men of action, of Spanish colonizers and *conquistadores*.

His weakness has been his style, loose and incorrect but by virtue of its very tumultuousness capable of powerful effects. "Despertaba la huerta, y sus bostezos eran cada vez más ruidosos. Rodaba el canto del gallo de barraca en barraca; los campanarios de los pueblecitos devolvían con ruidosas badajadas el toque de misa primera que sonaba a lo lejos en las torres de Valencia, azules, esfumadas por la distancia, y de los corrales salía un discordante concierto animal, relinchos de caballos, mugidos de mansas vacas, cloquear de gallinas, balidos de corderos, ronquidos de cerdos, el despertar ruidoso de las bestias que al sentir la fresca caricia del amanecer cargada de acre perfume de vegetación, deseaban correr por los campos." Here, although the vocabulary displays a certain poverty, the atmosphere is well reproduced. More disastrous is the author's fondness for the imperfect tense, recording typical, symbolical action, not individual particular acts, so that a veil is raised between the reader and reality, or rather the atmosphere swallows the characters, whose figures at each stroke of the painter's brush become more blurred and distant. Yet in his regional pictures his careless, hurried style is so rapid and vivid, so full of vigour and colour, that it vindicates itself against its critics.

Vigorous action, revolt, life and effort run through his work; his most successfully drawn heroes are men of strenuous endeavour: it is doubtful whether readers will be able to remember any of his heroines. But they will certainly also remember the atmosphere of many of his novels, not only the natural rustic background of *La Barraca* or *Los Muertos mandan*, but the social element of *La Horda*, *El Intruso*, *La Bodega*. With Blasco Ibáñez the Spanish novel becomes largely social and anonymous; the individual is merged in the representative of a class or race: a new departure in the very individualistic literature of Spain. Either the crowd or a man who dominates the crowd in a momentary splendid isolation are his favourite subjects. He forcibly makes the crowd alive; he insists on imparting life and revolt to the miners of Bilbao; he galvanizes the peasants of Andalucía; he rebels against the deadness of Toledo; and this courageous endeavour to make the dead bones live has sometimes been his downfall, as in *Los Argonautas*, where the material became a rebel indeed and he wrestles with a subject which a less energetic and living writer would not have attempted, only to present us with a block of dead matter for his pains.

But this and other comparative failures from his pen are not the negation but the sign and proof of his talent; they are the failures of a man who determines to set fire to a mountain and finds that it will not burn; the mountain remains inert and motionless, but the man is not crushed: he turns eagerly from such contumacious deadness to some more inflammable material. Señor Blasco Ibáñez' great success as an international novelist during the war, *Los Cuatro Jinetes del Apocalipsis*, lives in the first pages, describing the violent and generous *gaucho* Madariaga, and lives in the vivid account of

THE NOVEL

the retreat to the Marne: "In the spaces left free in this procession, in the gaps opening between a battery and a regiment, trotted groups of peasants; a miserable crowd thrown forward by the invasion; whole villages which had broken up and followed the retreating army. The advance of a fresh regiment drove them out of the road, to continue their march across country; but wherever the mass of troops thinned, they returned and pressed forward along the white, even surface of the roadway. There were mothers pushing carts containing pyramids of furniture and small children; invalids crawling forward, octogenarians carried on the shoulders of their grandchildren; grandfathers with children in their arms, old women with children hanging to their skirts like a nest of silent birdlings."

Or again "The dragoons had blocked the street with a barricade of carts and furniture. On foot, rifle in hand, they kept watch behind this barrier on the lap of road which rose solitary between wooded hills. Scattered shots sounded from time to time, like the cracking of whips. 'That is our men,' said the dragoons. It was the rearguard skirmishing with the van of the Uhlans; the cavalry had instructions to keep in touch with the advancing enemy and to put up an unceasing defence in order to prevent the Germans from mingling with the retiring columns. The last infantry troops now came along the road; they were not marching, rather they appeared to crawl, having a resolute will to advance but being betrayed in their desire by their paralyzed legs and blood-stained feet." Here the author's style, not in itself distinguished, receives a distinction from its subject, his favourite subject ever since his first novel a quarter of a century earlier (for somehow these vanquished but defiant soldiers

remind one of the solitary Batiste in the Huerta): that of the action of struggling, striving, defeated but indomitable heroes, the epic of the anonymous.

The influence of the Naturalistic school, which in Vicente Blasco Ibáñez was corrected by the force of regionalism, made itself felt in a more acute phase in Spain at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. An Army doctor, FELIPE TRIGO, brought a Spanish outspokenness to un-Spanish themes which had been eschewed by a saner realism. Imbued with socialistic theories, he held that love was the principal business of life and that love must be free. He declared that his æsthetic ideal was "the glorification of the whole of Life"; but by Life he understood only the passion of life, and that in a limited sense. Whatever gifts he possessed as novelist he ruined by applying a thesis and system to art, narrowing his vision and taking one side only of life for his theme. "My novels constitute an almost methodical study of love and its violent passions, whether fierce or foolish, seen in that adverse atmosphere in which it has so far always existed" (Preface to *Sor Demonio*). Within these limits he could be keenly psychological and vivid, with a natural skill in dialogue; but his art rings æsthetically false.

The literary critic believes that what is artistic cannot be immoral, and that just as a really great picture cannot excite foul passions, a literary masterpiece cannot be vulgar or unclean. If it is not raised by its style into a higher, purer air, it must perish, like the beasts of the field. None of Trigo's works can resist the application of this standard; they melt away like figures of wax and sugar because they are false and meretricious and so circumscribed in their view that they succeed in being not only sordid but extremely monotonous and wearisome. No doubt their author was

THE NOVEL

sincere and possessed the faculty of deceiving himself into the belief that, as a Spanish D'Amunzio, he was writing works of art, and even that he was writing with a moral purpose. It is very probable that he was more sincere and ethically more serious than D'Amunzio, but whereas the Italian writer only occasionally lapses from art into vulgarity, Trigo rarely rises from spurious into true art. His ideal of the union of Venus and the Immaculate Conception and a return to a natural state of society was part of a vague sentimentalism which was one of the defects of his work and which deprived his style of strength and clearness of outline.

If, as he maintained, he wished to display a "mortal hatred of pornography, vice and all base and vulgar passions," it can only be said that he set about it in a peculiar way. It must have occurred to him that the Spanish reading public had made great strides artistically when he compared the 100,000 pesetas which *Las Ingenuas* brought him with the 2,000 which was all that Valera received for *Pepita Jiménez*. The publication of *Las Ingenuas* was an ominous beginning for Spanish literature in the Twentieth Century. Hailed by certain critics as a masterpiece, it was widely read, and with the novels which followed in rapid succession from the same pen during the next ten years, proved a corrupting influence in the already not very innocent atmosphere of Spanish cities, and pandered to the perverted taste which Menéndez y Pelayo had earlier deplored.

No doubt Trigo's "heroes" were ironically presented; he did not expressly approve their conduct; in *Sor Demonio*, for instance, the *hidalgo* is portrayed as an example of the contradiction between external *honra* and internal baseness (its sub-title is *El honor de un marido hidalgo y metafísico*); but he appears to take for granted that Southern blood is in-

capable of self-restraint, while the zest with which he dwells not on the *honra* but on the baseness is somewhat disconcerting for the plea of a moral purpose. If art can include a lyric description of town drains, Trigo's work may be considered artistic, scarcely otherwise. In passages of *La Sed de Amar* there is a greater intensity, and the figure of Jorge may have been modelled on that of Stendhal's Fabricio (one is not surprised to find Jorge reading Stendhal); yet it suffices to mention the two to show the immeasurable gulf that yawns between them. Whether Trigo's ideal was *La Chartreuse de Parme* or *Il Piacere*, he fell very far short of either the French or the Italian novel.

No doubt there was in him the making of a poet and a genuine artist; but, misled by his theories and by the success of his first novel, he never paused to give these artistic impulses free play. "Oyó las esquilas de las cabras. Miró y vió que pacían ladera abajo, en torno del adelfal" (*Sor Demonio*). For a moment a breath of poetry, expressed with admirable sobriety, comes into the page; but the author in blinkers is too intent on his main business, the analysis of the brutal force of love, to turn aside. Trigo is concerned exclusively with that narrow phase of life represented by modern civilization, the life in cities, trains, steamers and hôtels, and although for rustic or half-witted youths his books may have novelty and attraction, to any other reader this limitation of their sphere is apt to render them cloying and tedious. Nor, when he escapes from this atmosphere, would English readers be greatly impressed by the vaunted description of India and "Sir Sutton" (in *Las Ingenuas*), which a venturesome Spanish critic has compared to the work of Mr. Rudyard Kipling: "The majestic solitude of the mountains, the wild depths of the valleys in whose rocky channels thun-

dered invisible cataracts under evergreen woods; the hot scent of gigantic forests, from which at night, in the warm moonlight, came the cry of jackals, and the roaring of stags; the deserted sea and the great sky closing those wide horizons."

There is nothing here very original, subtle or convincing. His style as a rule lacked vigour and was thoroughly un-Castilian; like the icing on a cake or Plateresque art at its worst, it seems to betray a fundamental if unconscious insincerity. As a whole his work serves to show the immense superiority artistically of the old Spanish realism, which could be dignified and pithily discreet even when most brutal, and it should have warned those who wished to write artistically to beware of "almost methodical" studics. Had Trigo possessed a sense of humour, he would certainly have shown the characters of his novels in a saner light. The very titles of some of his books, as *La de los ojos de color de uva*, show a pliant sense of style and power of insinuation; but his work will not endure, because it is inartistic, un-Spanish, narrow and dull, the work of a Zolaesque pseudo-scientific dissector of corpses rather than the portrayal of life and analysis of the passions of men and women. His works were read, some critics applauded them and in view of their success it was natural that he should have followers. Indeed, he may be said to have founded a school, although few of his disciples succeeded in emerging from obscurity.

A follower of Trigo born at Havana, Don ALBERTO INSUA, also owes much to modern French novelists, although his knowledge of foreign literatures is by no means confined to that of France. This cultivated author's erotic novels show a sense of style (although he has not cared to be *castizo*) and a skill in construction worthy of nobler and more universal

themes. There is something substantial beneath their frothy lightness, and the characters are ably drawn, as the development of Conchita Blanco from sincerity to perversity since her school-days at a Havana college, in *El Peligro*, or the tragic figure of Eugenia Molinero, faithful victim of the selfish Roberto, in *Las Flechas del Amor*, or the weak *revolucionario teórico* Alfredo Sangil in *La Hora Trágica*. Sangril kills the man who had shot the actress they both loved, and it is hinted that this resolute act will be the beginning of his redemption. This novel is the second volume of a trilogy of which the other parts are *En Tierra de Santos* and *El Triunfo*. The observation is mostly internal, and whether the scene be Madrid or Paris, Cuba or Switzerland matters but little, for it contains nothing characteristic or indigenous. In his early work, *Don Quijote en los Alpes*, the scene is Switzerland, but the subject is mainly Amiel, not lakes or mountains. Señor Insua's interest is in persons, and chiefly in individual persons. At most he will give us (in *Las Flechas del Amor*) a vivid picture of the squalor, feckless envy and greed for gold in the household of a poor family at Madrid.

In his Francophil war novel, the "international episode" *De un mundo a otro*, he expresses the opinion that in order to be a Spaniard "one need not live at Cuenca or Salamanca or Madrid" and that the best Spaniards to-day "are not the stationary but the wanderers" (referring perhaps to the greater optimism of Spaniards who return to their country after seeing something of the miseries of the rest of the world). Nevertheless, with his power of observation and psychology he might be expected to achieve real triumphs were he to become an *español estadizo* and spend the remainder of his days in Avila or Sigüenza. The scene of *Las Fronteras de la Pasión* is Madrid and Normandy. The

theme, the desirability of divorce, is here too obvious and it is unconvincingly presented because the stupidity of Miguel de Montalvo's wife is so exaggerated as to make the case exceptional and improbable.

La Batalla Sentimental is the story of a literary Spaniard of good family who lives in Paris and breaks with his old-fashioned father and religious sister in order to marry Cristiana, the charming daughter of a dubious financier. The charming Cristiana proves to be a kleptomaniac. She is very wealthy and took to stealing as a hobby. This has the result of making both her husband and herself anxious to leave Paris and return to his ancestral country house in Spain, where the old *hidalgo* his father is straining his eyes along the road that leads to France. And one day the old man gives a cry of joy, and the novel ends. This ending might well be the beginning of a new and more Spanish phase in the author's art, since he is a writer who learns and develops.

The malagueño Don SALVADOR GONZÁLEZ ANAYA, of Naturalistic tendency as a disciple of Trigo in *Rebelión* (1905), attained a saner realism and a more vigorous style in *La Sangre de Abel* (1915). Señor CIGES APARICIO wrote bitter, vivid accounts of his experiences in Cuba: *El Libro de la Vida Trágica* (1903), *El Libro de la Crueldad* (1906), *El Libro de la Vida Doliente* (1906). Don JOSÉ FRANCÉS has developed out of the Naturalistic school and shows character in his plays and short stories and an individual style in his later novels. A regard for style is evident in Don PEDRO MATA's novel *Corazones sin rumbo* (1917), followed by *Un grito en la noche*, *El Hombre de la rosa blanca*, *El Hombre que se reía del amor*. Don RAFAEL LÓPEZ DE HARO dedicated his *Entre todas las*

mujeres to Trigo in 1910. Its main interest consists in its descriptions of Asturias, as that of *Las Sensaciones de Julia* lies not in Julia's intimate diary but in occasional glimpses of Galicia. His *Muera el señorito* contrasts Madrid life with that of "a Spain the existence of which no one in Madrid will realize." He is careless of style, and is not afraid of such words as *buró* (bureau), *restorán* (restaurant), *toaleta* (toilette).

An ever-increasing number of writers have devoted themselves to study Madrid life. Don PEDRO DE RÉPIDE did so with striking success in *De Rastro a Maravillas* (1907). In a series of volumes Don EMILIANO RAMÍREZ ANGEL has brought observation and analysis to bear on the life of the capital and court, as shown in *Cabalgata de Horas*, *Madrid Sentimental*, *La Vida de siempre* and *La Villa y Corte Pintoresca*. Its humble or middle-class life has been studied by Don MAURICIO LÓPEZ ROBERTS in his able novels *Las de García Triz*, *La Novela de Lino Arnáiz* and *El Verdadero Hogar*; and by Don AUGUSTO MARTÍNEZ OLMEDILLA in *Los Hijos* (which calls itself a *trilogía novelesca* but suffers from its narrow theme), *Todo por él* and *Resurgimiento*. RAFAEL SALILLAS made a special study of the criminal classes in *La Hampa* and other works. In a much more naturalistic sense Don ANTONIO DE HOYOS Y VINENT, Marqués de Vinent, has specialized scientifically, after the Zola creed, in impersonal descriptions of the vice of cities, the scene being Madrid, although the atmosphere is rather that of Paris. His taste and style have, however, recently shown a tendency to become more Castilian, and with his powerful talent and pertinacious industry we may expect from him works of truer realism and a more universal appeal. An able Spanish critic speaks of

THE NOVEL

his "conventional teratology, in which, although at first this seems not to be the case, there is really much less variety than in daily life." A *castizo* style is seen in *Nuestro Amigo Juan* (1924), the latest novel of Don JUAN AGUILAR CATENA, author of *Los Enigmas de María Luz* (1917) and *Herida en el vuelo*.

§ 6. THE SHORT STORY

A separate volume might be written on the development of the Spanish short story, the *cuento*, in one form or another always a favourite with Spanish readers but never so freely and variously cultivated as of late years. Here it must suffice merely to call attention to the excellence of the short stories of some of the celebrated novelists, especially Valera, Alas, Alarcón, Emilia Pardo Bazán and Vicente Blasco Ibáñez. Most of Emilia Pardo Bazán's *cuentos* are of Galicia, some of those of Blasco Ibáñez deal with Valencia, and generally the regionalist short story is prominent.

EUSEBIO BLASCO won fame among his contemporaries as a playwright and parodist and his *El Pañuelo Blanco* is still popular; but probably he will survive mainly in his *Cuentos Aragoneses* (1901), which are marked by sharp characterization and a simplicity which has the art to conceal its subtlety. Their humour grows out of the mingled shrewdness and stupidity, obstinacy and good feeling of the Aragonese peasant. Their motto might be "A clean hearth and the rigour of the game" or, as honest Tío Valero has it, *Las cuentas claras y el chocolate espeso*. One of them goes for a doctor on a stormy night and the doctor throws a recipe weighted by a brick out of the window for the patient to take. Next day the patient is dead: they have tried to force

him to swallow the brick. Or an illiterate man, about to be executed, asks a friend to write to his mother, and the friend, considering that the execution is fixed for the following day and that the letter will take two days, breaks the news thus: "Dear Mother, They garrotted me yesterday." But such things appear insipid when taken out of the context of native flavour and deceptive ingenuousness with which Blaseo contrived so deliciously to season his wares.

Don ALBERTO CASANAL, of Cadiz, tells Aragonese tales in *Cuentos Baturros* (1898) and sings festively of Aragon in *Baturradas* (1898), *Más Baturradas* (1903) and *Nuevas Baturradas* (1912). The short stories of Don JUAN BLAS Y UBIDE, author of the novel *Sarica la Borda*, have that pithy simplicity, that stamp of truth and strong character, which seems peculiarly Aragonese. The studies of Don ARTURO REYES in *Cosas de mi tierra* (1893), *Sangre Torera* (1912) and other stories are of his native Málaga. Don ANTONIO REYES HUERTAS writes of Extremadura in *La Sangre de la Raza* (1920) and *Los Humildes Senderos* (1920), works which may be described as long short stories.

The death at the early age of thirty-five of JUAN OCHOA was a loss to literature, for he had had time to show his talent for the novel and the short story in *Su Amado Discípulo* and *Alma de Dios*, in which his Asturian humour appears more nearly akin to that of Palaeio Valdés than to that of the satirical Alas. *Los Señores de Hermida* appeared posthumously in 1900. A special aptitude for the short story is observable in the work of the Marqués de VILLASINDA (like Don Vicente de Pereda and Enrique Menéndez y Pelayo, overshadowed by a greater fame) in *Visto y Soñado* (1903) and other novels and *cuentos*; and

THE NOVEL

in that of Don FRANCISCO ACEBAL, one of the leading writers of the day, author of the poignant novel of the Cantabrian coast, *Aires de Mar*, which was followed by remarkable studies of Madrid life. We shall find the short story flourishing in the work of Señor Pérez de Ayala, and we may expect to see it play a prominent part in the future.

§ 7. THE HISTORICAL NOVEL

The historical novel (apart from the National Episodes of Galdós, prolonged on the one hand by Baroja, on the other by Don Alfonso Dánvila in *Las luchas fratricidas en España*) has not been widely cultivated in Spain during the last half-century, although the mantle of Enrique Gil seemed to have fallen on the shoulders of the Cantabrian poet and novelist AMOS DE ESCALANTE when he published *Ave Maris Stella*, one of the best historical novels of the century. Don Adolfo Bonilla, in collaboration with another distinguished scholar, Don Julio Puyol, wrote an historical novel of the age of Philip IV in *La Hostería de Cantillana*. Don Emilio Cotarelo y Morí likewise for a moment turned from scholarship to the novel in *El Hijo del Conde Duque*. None of these novels attained the life and brilliance of *La Gloria de Don Ramiro*, by the Argentine writer Don ENRIQUE RODRÍGUEZ LARRETA. It is the novel of Avila, Sixteenth-Century Avila. So careful a study of the period might have given birth to a dull and tiresome book, one of those archæological novels in which it requires a great genius to be successful. But the pitfall has been avoided, and Señor Larreta's story is living and intense.

The interest is not so much in the plot as in the figures that pass, the powerfully described scenes, the sound and

colour of the century of Spain's greatness, recorded in a style at once pure and rich, if sometimes (perhaps by the nature of the case) a trifle artificial. Take, for instance, the figure of the Grand Inquisitor Gaspar de Quiroga as he passes to the *auto de fe* at Toledo, which is excellently described in one of the last chapters of the book: "Coming after the gloomy procession, his crimson robes had the rousing effect of a blare of trumpets. Except for the purple tippet of an inquisitor, all was a feast for the eyes, from crown to foot, one great splotch of dark-red. His brow wore a severe and holy look, his eyes did not even quiver. He passed on implacable as torture, gloomy and pompous as the sacrifice at which he was going to preside; red as the flame of fire. The morning light shone clearly on the chair of embossed silver and on all the gold and pearlseed of the amethyst cloth that swept the hoofs of his palfrey. No one dared break the respectful silence with a cheer." Or take the soberly drawn picture of Avila at sunset: "El sol acababa de ocultarse, y blanda, lentamente, las parroquias tocaban las oraciones. Era un coro, un llanto continuo de campanas cantantes, de campanas gemebundas en el tranquilo crepúsculo. Hubiérase dicho que la ciudad se hacía toda armoniosa, metálica, vibrante, y resonaba como un solo bronce, en el transporte de su plegaria."

No doubt, for a modern Argentinian to attempt to recapture fully the spirit and the language of those times was to attempt an impossibility, and occasionally the book rings false; yet few writers could have produced an historical novel so faithful to its period and at the same time of such fresh and absorbing interest. We are not surprised that it was the work of several years, and could even wish that the authors who publish a novel yearly with such clocklike reg-

ularity might sometimes pause for a more prolonged interval; perhaps in that case *La Gloria de Don Ramiro* would not stand out, as it now does, as an achievement so remarkable and so rare.

Here and there one notices the labour of the file (*un pintor a quien llamaban El Greco; un pintor formado en Venecia a quien llamaban El Greco*); so the phrase *el sol acababa de ocultarse* occurs more than once; perhaps it will be said that the phenomenon is not rare and that the sun set some two thousand times while the novel was being written; nevertheless such repetitions are perhaps an indication that the book has something of the character of a *tour de force*, laboured, although very brilliantly laboured, and that it is unlikely to have a sequel from the author's pen. He hurled himself into the atmosphere of ancient Castilian cities; his very style has caught something of the strength and vigour of those spacious days; ten or twenty years later it would be no surprise to find the same author writing in a style totally different. But even were this so, and the style a disguise assumed for the purpose of his novel and subsequently doffed, that would not alter the fact that in *La Gloria de Don Ramiro* he has left us no perishable garment, but a gleaming coat of mail of enduring value.

§ 8. BAROJA AND THE SOCIAL NOVEL

The attitude towards life of Don PÍO BAROJA and his heroes seems always a shrugging of the shoulders and a muttered "What is the use?" Yet he has published and continues to publish many books. Why write them? Why, with his spiritual nihilism, trouble to create? But Señor Baroja is a Basque—that is, primarily a man of action—and

where there is an obstacle he will not rest until he has overcome it. When he has won universal admiration, it is quite possible that he will not write another line or that he will turn to some field of literature other than the novel. "No doubt it was the obstacles which gave me force and spirit," says his Basque hero Zalacaín, "the knowledge that everybody was eager to prevent me. . . . Now I am confronted by no obstacles and know not what to do. I shall have to invent for myself new occupations and difficulties."

Señor Baroja's novels are all movement and action (or rather disconnected actions), shot through with original thoughts and brief descriptions of persons and places. They have been compared with the old *novelas de pícaros* and with the modern Russian novels, especially with the stories of Maxim Gorki. Their subject is often that of the *pícaro's* quandaries and adventures, the treatment is essentially modern. Objective and impersonal, they are sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought; life for him is tragic, and his sincerity is sometimes appalling. "I do not claim to be a man of good taste but to be sincere," he says. Yet a little pretence is as necessary to life as salt is in preparing a meal. It cannot be all truth and ferocity, without humour. With Baroja the crowd comes into its own in Spanish literature; not, that is, a multitude acting in common, but a crowd of outcasts, a throng of ragged, persecuted, restless human beings, *vidas sombrías* that pass tragically, aimlessly, in a tattered procession across the stage.

In *La Busca* he rakes out the underworld, the *gente descentrada*, of Madrid at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Hucksters, beggars, petty thieves, ragpickers, *golfos*, gipsies, cobblers, clowns swarm in the Rastro of the "city of contrasts" and in taverns and great sordid houses: "many

changed their profession as a snake changes its skin," the constant factor in their lives being "their everlasting and hopeless penury." The scenes are described with much economy of line; for instance, the characteristically thin and pitiless account of a bullfight; and the figures are similarly etched in a few words, as that of the Madrid beggar who, "dressed in rags, leant against the wall in a dignified indifference." *Mala Hierba* and *Aurora Roja* complete this trilogy of *La Lucha por la Vida*, which, in its deliberate study of certain phases of life, belongs to the Zola school.

The trilogy *El Pasado* begins, in *La Feria de los Discretos*, by studying Córdoba with all the care and interest of a Northerner: the clear air, the magical sunsets of gold and opal and crimson, the glowing white and light-hued houses, *patios* of orange-trees, narrow silent streets and dingy taverns, the court of the Mosque with its oranges and pigeons and chattering sparrows, and all the bustle and clamour and colour of the market-place with its quaint hucksters' cries. The interest of the novel is chiefly incidental, as is the case with so much of Señor Baroja's work. The other two volumes of the trilogy, *Los Ultimos Románticos* and *Las Tragedias Grotescas*, have no connexion with the first, and their scenes lie mainly in Paris, in the last years of the Second Empire and in the Commune. The action centres in the obscure machinations of Spanish revolutionaries. If a momentary interest is awakened by Carlos Yarza or by the queer Pipot with his chocolate-coloured dog, the uneventful life of the insipid Don Callisto Bengoa in his "love of the medioere" fails to charm or hold the attention.

More intense is the trilogy of *La Vida Fantástica*, composed of *Silvestre Paradox*, *Camino de Perfección* and *Paradox Rey*. In its implacable Basque directness, its avoidance

of generalities, abstractions and Latin smoothness, almost one might say of any decent veil of reserve, *Camino de Perfección* is characteristic of Baroja, at any rate of the young Baroja. Its rapid, vivid and precise descriptions of Castile and the Guadarrama country lend attraction to the hero's constant wanderings.

In the trilogy named *La Raza* the author gives free play to his vagabond instincts, for Dr. Aracil is implicated in an anarchist outrage at Madrid (the attempt on the life of the King and Queen of Spain on their wedding-day) and his escape with his daughter provides opportunity for describing the country between the capital and the Portuguese frontier and for some of those shrewd incisive comments on the psychology of nations in which Señor Baroja delights (in this case, that of the Portuguese). One must of course not expect more than passing impressions. The Sierra de Guadarrama is "an embattled wall," a great wave of granite rockily outlined on the cloudless blue sky, but the wonderful view on the way up from Arenas de San Pedro to Guisando is dismissed as follows: "They asked a washerwoman the way to Guisando, and now more slowly proceeded to this village through great pinewoods." For the reader who knows the scene this is perhaps enough to recall it: he sees the delicious mountain path in pines and chestnuts, the scarlet-skirted women coming up from washing clothes in the river which sounds below, the silence of the hanging pine-forests on the mountain's flank opposite, and the purple of the granite sierra against the soft turquoise sky.

In the same way, for one who knows the Basque country intimately Señor Baroja's Basque novels will have a peculiar fascination, but to those for whom every place-name of village or mountain does not possess its charm of mem-

ory and association they may seem mere skeletons, almost catalogues of names. The adventures in *Zalacaín el Aventurero* are so many that the places pass breathlessly before us and it requires special knowledge to fill in the outlines and make a masterpiece of the novel. Señor Baroja would no doubt shrug his shoulders and say that, if by impressions and suggestions he has outlined a masterpiece, that is enough, and certainly the interest in the hero Martín is sufficient to string the incidents together, while an attempt has evidently been made to round off the story of his brief life. Typical of this novel's excessive rapidity is the sketch of Santa Cruz: "He was a stout man, rather short than tall, of insignificant appearance, a little over thirty. The only impressive thing about him was the look in his eyes, threatening, oblique and hard. After a few minutes the priest raised his eyes and said 'Good evening.' He then continued reading."

The two earlier volumes of the trilogy *Tierra Vasca* are more stationary. In *La Casa de Aizgorri*, an account of industrialism as opposed to agriculture in a Basque town, the characters are slightly more emphasized: the cynical Don Lucio de Aizgorri, his charming courageous daughter Agueda, her lover Mariano, her feckless brother Luis, the kindly sensible doctor Don Julián, the superstitious old servant Melchora. In *El Mayorazgo de Labraz*, another skeleton of a fine novel, in which the characters are lightly sketched, we have a series of notes describing the decay of a small Basque town, with glimpses of the life of a provincial *hidalgo*, Don Juan, in its mixture of "sumptuousness and penury." In *La Leyenda de Jaun de Alzate* Señor Baroja returns to the country of *Zalacaín el Aventurero*, that is, the hills and villages of the lovely region to the south and north of the Bidasoa. For those unacquainted with this country

one can imagine that this strange and fascinating book, with its Basque names and its snatches of Basque song, may be disconcerting and difficult; but, without being precisely a *Faust*, the work has a real interest of its own. The same atmosphere pervades *Idilios Vascos* and *Idilios y Fantasías*.

The first novel of the trilogy *El Mar*, of which the second is *El Laberinto de las Sirenas*, also deals with the Basque country, a mile or two further west—that is, on the coast. The vivid pictures of the sea fill the book (*Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía*) with a peculiar charm and freshness: “Las olas se metían entre los resquicios de la pizarra, en el corazón del monte, y se las veía saltar blancas y espumosas como surtidores de nieve. . . . El agua, verde y blanca, saltaba furiosa entre las piedras; las olas rompían en lluvia de espuma y avanzaban como manadas de caballos salvajes, con las crines al aire. . . . Bajo el agua transparente se veía la roca carcomida, llena de agujeros, cubierta de lapas. En el fondo, entre las líquenes verdes y las piedrecitas de colores, aparecían rojos erizos de mar cuyos tentáculos blandos se contraían al tocarlos. En la superficie flotaba un trozo de hierba marina, que al macerarse en el agua quedaba como un ramito de filamentos plateados, una pluma de gaviota o un trozo de corcho. Algun pececillo plateado [the same colour, the same word] pasaba como una flecha, cruzando el pequeño oceano, y de cuando en cuando el gran monstruo de este diminuto mar, el cangrejo, salía de su rincón, andando traídormente de lado, y su ojo enorme inspeccionaba sus dominios buscando una presa. . . . Se siente ese silencio del mar lleno del gemido agudo del viento, del grito áspero de las gaviotas, de la voz colérica de la ola que va en aumento hasta que revienta en la playa y se retira con el rumor de una multitud que protesta.” We are per-

haps more attracted by this atmosphere of the sea than by the adventures themselves, yet we are made to feel the perils and escapes of these hardy Basque mariners as we feel the charm of the south wind (*aice hegoa*) when "the distant promontories are seen in a transparent clearness and the coast of France and the coast of Spain are marked distinctly as in a map."

The trilogy *Las Ciudades* contains two of Señor Baroja's best-known novels: *Cesar o Nada*, which has its own intensity despite the author's evident pleasure in shocking the reader by his indifference to the classical antiquities of Rome, and *El Mundo es así*, in which our interest is less in the Russian heroine and the cosmopolitan background than in the acute and penetrating incidental remarks, those piquant and ingenious scraps of which Señor Baroja has so rich a treasury. The third volume, *La Sensualidad Perversa*, is a series of disconnected scenes in the Basque provinces, at Madrid and Paris, in which many readers may prefer the description of an old house in a Basque village, *la casa de mi abuela*.

Besides the trilogies and sundry stray volumes of recollections and reflections, Señor Baroja has written a dozen volumes of *Memorias de un Hombre de Acción*. Although their hero, the Liberal adventurer and freemason Eugenio de Aviraneta, is an historical personage, these episodes are much less historical and more individual than the *Episodios Nacionales* of Galdós. Occasionally they have something in common: Santoreaz in *Bailén* and *Don Martín el Empecinado* is such a figure as Señor Baroja loves to draw, and might be a preliminary study for his Aviraneta. Señor Baroja has remarked somewhere on this point that "Some critics have compared these novels of mine with the National

Episodes of Pérez Galdós [for whom Baroja had not great admiration]. I think the resemblance is purely external: that of the period and the subject. Galdós went to history attracted by history, but I owing to my interest in a type; Galdós sought out the most brilliant moments in order to narrate them, while I have insisted on those which were provided me by my protagonist. . . . Artistically Galdós' work is like a collection of pictures, skilfully painted and brilliantly coloured; mine might be compared to woodcuts wrought with greater patience and more roughly."

The *Memorias* are not too near in time, as was *La Dama Errante*, but sufficiently near to have an actual interest. Some of their scattered episodes are etched with a vividness so intense that they warrant us in placing Don Pío Baroja among the great writers of the Twentieth Century. The fight in the Hontoria pass in *El Escuadron del Brigante* and the vengeance of the Exterminating Angel in *Los Recursos de la Astucia* are but two instances out of many in which the reader finds it difficult to believe that he has not actually heard with his ears and seen with his eyes. The Canon, accused of political treachery, is riding, full of foreboding, accompanied by his *mozo*, through a lonely district on his way from Cuenca to Sigüenza. They arrive at a deserted hermitage. The hermit must have died, says the Canon. No, answers the *mozo*, they killed him. Perhaps to rob him? suggests the Canon. No, it seems it was an act of vengeance of the Royalists: he is said to have given information to the Constitutionals. As they ride on, the sun disappears from the valley, and in a dark wood the Canon suddenly finds himself with two figures in front of him, and, as he looks back, two others behind: "The Exterminators rode slowly out of the gully. One of them, the leader, remained

to see to the final arrangements. The men carried down the body, and taking it in their arms crossed the wood to the path which ran along the edge of the ravine, and threw it down into the depths. There was the sound of a body falling and carrying stones in its fall. The leader approached the edge and looked down. The light of the sun had left the valley, and it now lay in darkness and shadow. The Exterminator crossed himself, muttered something resembling a prayer, mounted and disappeared rapidly."

Aviraneta serves under El Empecinado, who is introduced in the second volume and whose tragic death, with that of Byron, is described in *Los Contrastes de la Vida*. Readers of Baroja will naturally not expect any unity of interest or action in these *Memorias*. They skip about from place to place (the scene of *La Ruta del Aventurero* is Valencia and the Basque country and Seville and Madrid) and from incident to incident with perfect irresponsibility. *La Veleta de Gastizar* and *Los Caudillos de 1830* are two halves of one and the same book, its scene being, like that of the first volume of the *Memorias* (*El Aprendiz de Conspirador*), the Basque country in Spain and France. The scene of *El Sabor de la Venganza* is mainly Madrid, the scene, that is, in which, apart from the Basque country, Señor Baroja is most at home. *Las Furias* takes us to Barcelona in 1836.

What the volumes have in common is their peculiar vividness: "the narrative of clear, concrete facts, naked and unadorned" (*Las Furias*). They constantly whet our appetite for more or inspire us with a wish for fuller treatment. Señor Baroja, like a good doctor, believes in keeping his reader hungry. There is matter for a long story in the "second-hand bookseller, a former monk," but this is all we are given: "This man was so devoted to his books and pa-

pers that when he sold any of them he was seized with such despair at finding himself without his folio or manuscript that he would go out after the purchaser and murder him to retrieve it" (*Las Furias*). So in *Zalacaín el Aventurero* the village life and philosophy of the delicious Tellagorri, "a man of good heart and bad reputation," might furnish material for a separate volume or volumes could Señor Baroja linger over his characters with the loving-kindness of an Anatole France. But he will not or cannot do so. He will not or cannot concentrate more than momentarily. He refuses to round off a character or finish a story, or indeed construct a plot.

In the guise of a critic of 1954, he says of *La Sensualidad Pervertida*: "There is nothing less literary than this book. It is a pity that it is not properly finished and that it was written in such a hurry and in part in a telegraphic style." And as "literature consists in this, to give an ending to what has none," he declares that he is no *literato*. "Life never ends. One is ever at both the end and the beginning" (*Las Tragedias Grotescas*). He is the champion of unliterary literature. Yet the contradiction is not merely apparent and superficial, and it might be wiser if those who, like Señor Baroja, have a horror of rhetoric and of all that is conventional, were to wage their war against false, artificial literature while still maintaining that literature should be, above all things, literary; otherwise art soon descends into strange modernist antics.

All the *curiosa felicitas* which attends Señor Baroja's etching of *figures et choses qui passaient* deserts him when he attempts to dismiss in an epithet or phrase some great literary figure, a Pereda or a Flaubert or a Ruskin. It is said of a celebrated Spaniard that he confessed on his deathbed

that he had always been intensely bored by Dante. Señor Baroja waits for no deathbed repentance; he would abhor such lifelong deceit; he insists on clearing his mind of cant. He believes, perhaps rightly, that many persons profess admiration for poets whom they have never read, whereas he himself has a passion for sincerity. We may admire this sincerity, we may sympathize with and pity a man who cannot enjoy Dante or Milton or Luis de Leon or Plato, but our utmost admiration and sympathy will not make us accept him as a good literary critic. Señor Baroja's remarks, for instance, on Pereda, in *Juventud*, *Egolatría* and *La Caverna del Humorismo*, are lamentable indeed.

One can understand that so full-bodied a writer should not appeal to one who prefers the cold lines of El Greco to the more substantial effects of a Velazquez. Señor Baroja like Goya admirably catches and etches an attitude or a series of actions, but he will not stay to make them more than fugitive impressions; to weave around them an atmosphere, which after all is the writer's art. The reader is divided between the belief that he will not and the belief that he cannot. To some degree his æsthetic sense is defective, and it is clear that artistic composition and unity of plot are beyond him and that there is something of sour grapes in his disdain. The original ideas which abound, for instance, in the second volume of *La Raza*, when Dr. Aracil has escaped to London (*La Ciudad de la Niebla*), and in the third volume, *El Arbol de la Ciencia*, the story of the life and suicide of a doctor, Andrés Hurtado, do not entirely compensate, at least artistically, for this lack of method and unity. Nevertheless the realm of Art has many mansions; it admits the sharp fantastic forms of a Zuloaga as well as the rounded grace of a Raffael. Señor Baroja resolutely refuses to put flesh

upon his literary bones, but it is his triumph that he does succeed in making the dry bones live.

Yet if one eschews all literary artifice, reality tends to merge itself in the commonplace, and this danger Señor Baroja's work has by no means entirely escaped. His books come to him "sin pensarlo ni quererlo" (*Juventud, Ego-latría*) and the reader sometimes suffers in consequence; "I write my books without a plan; were I to make a plan, I should never get to the end. When I attempted to write a play I could never follow it out to its *dénouement*" (*Prólogo to Páginas Escogidas*). Much of his writing is, of course, in one sense intensely dramatic, although *La Casa de Aizgorri* and *La Leyenda de Jaun de Alzate* have nothing dramatic about them except their division into acts (*jornadas*).

With his keen vision and skill in psychology, Señor Baroja sits solitary and motionless watching the figures pass. For a moment the figures are seen with the utmost distinctness in the limited but brilliant plot of light before they disappear. He holds his electric torch unflinchingly to the dark places while his rebels and outcasts, adventurers, toilers and fighters go by; but, however interesting a man's face, the temptation to hold him back for further examination would be scorned as a literary artifice, involving abandonment of the author's objectivity, his acid, icy indifference. Cold and impersonal, he is essentially intellectual, although he can write with his heart as well as with his head. That many of his characters are egoistic, cynical, unmoral, repulsive, is but a subtle irony and *socarronería*, or, if you will, an act of sincerity, on the part of their inventor or recorder; an immoral author would have sought to render these characters attractive: Señor Baroja presents them to us without paint. His thought, as in his psychological analysis of per-

sons and peoples, is sometimes penetrating and original, and a kind of native dignity makes the most deplorable incidents in his books outrageous rather than base.

His sincerity, sobriety and disdain often lend a distinction to his style. Purists have lamented that he writes ungrammatically and have hinted that his Castilian is translated Basque; but often its harshness is deliberate, and the absence of rhetoric, metaphors, generalities and abstractions should not be mistaken for poverty. Its concrete detail and precision (with individual names, for instance, for every plant and bird) often succeed in conveying an impression of vigour and intensity. The essential fact about this writer is that he will not have impressions at second hand nor wrap them up in a mesh of words. Take a little of Zola, Balzac, Stendhal, Dickens, Pérez Galdós, Nietzsche, Gorki and Dostoievsky (Señor Baroja declares that his favourite authors have been Dickens, Poe, Balzac, Stendhal, Dostoievsky and Turgenev), pour it into a spirit of Basque independence, incapable of assimilating more than a small portion of these or of any other writer, and you may perhaps account for the literary, unliterary Baroja. "All my literary impressions," he says, "come from Castile or the land of the Basques," and undoubtedly those countries are the spiritual home of the writer who preserves a love of austerity even when he displays most interest in ideas imported from abroad.

Perhaps the test of his character is still to come. The Basques as a rule seem to require opposition and are not proof against success. Señor Baroja in his pessimism, his conviction of *la vanitá del tutto*, hurls his characters into action and himself into constant writing as a kind of drug. But the world persists in reading, perhaps in enriching, this

rebel against society. It is not easy for the successful to persevere in anarchist beliefs. Will Señor Baroja continue, heretically outcast, to present practical courses and literary precepts and what he terms "intellectual spinach" which men of weaker mind will adopt at their peril; or will he, when the world is at his feet, resolutely slam his door in its face and abstain from writing another line? One cannot help suspecting that his crude, anti-social, anti-clerical creed is in some danger. He defends himself against Castile, entrenches himself in the solitudes of Vera, a beautiful village in a beautiful setting; but all the while Castile, with its good sense, its balance and good taste, has been steadily undermining and absorbing his spirit. He has said many harsh things of Spain, but he will remain to bless. For their part, critics who begin by feeling repelled by his work (which has indeed often proved a stumbling-block to literary critics) often end by being vanquished and fascinated by this author who writes so badly and so well. On the other hand, Señor Baroja owes something to his adverse, dull and unappreciative critics, for they have aroused his Basque combativeness and forced him to put forth all his strength, with the result that he is now recognized as one of the most original writers not only of Spain but of Europe.

§ 9. THE CLASSICAL NOVEL: RICARDO LEÓN

One might say that the opposite of Pío Baroja is RICARDO LEÓN. All that love of form and substance and poetry and rhetoric which Señor Baroja lacks or disdains is to be found abundantly in the works of Don Ricardo León. All that vision of beauty, bathed in Platonic light and wrapped in Castilian mysticism, which has been denied to

the Basque novelist has been granted in flowing measure to the younger Andalusian writer. Don Pío Baroja is all eye, Don Ricardo León all ear; Don Pío Baroja is pagan, sceptical, ultra-modern or prehistoric, Don Ricardo León is profoundly Christian, Catholic and Spanish. Señor Baroja, with all his love of liberty and independence, can be narrow, limited and partial; Señor León, with his love of order and religion, is tolerant, generous and broad-minded. Señor Baroja would gladly write without words were that possible; Señor León loves words for their own sake. Señor Baroja will give us nothing but seraps and outlines; Señor León insists on filling in and rounding off the picture, even at the risk of being conventional.

When one remembers that his first book, *Casta de Hidalgos*, appeared when the craze for unliterary literature was at its height and the Generation of 1898 was beginning to come into its own, one need not wonder that, faced by the extraordinary success of this first novel, the Generation of 1898 should have wished to twist the neck not only of Rhetoric but of Don Ricardo León. The young, old-fashioned writer who so rapidly became famous and was received into the Academy at an age little above that at which the precocious Menéndez y Pelayo himself had been admitted, was naturally subjected to searching criticism and to the shafts of envy. But it was really a war between two schools, the classical and impressionist, between form and thought, between the art of Velázquez and the art of El Greco.

Señor León was denounced as a lifeless insipid imitator of the Spanish classics. He proved capable of defending himself. In the preface to *Los Centauros* he turned upon his censors, his *desapacibles colegas*; and in the long dialogue or essay entitled *Examen de Ingenios*, which forms part of

La Escuela de los Sofistas, he justifies his point of view. There he defines the *castizo* as "that which in its style and language is pure, of unsullied origin, of sound race, without mixture of foreign blood or spurious influences," and demolishes the contention that *casticismo* is "the imitation of models and not the imitation of Nature, that is to say, a false art of artificial design" and that "art is life," that specious formula which has so mischievously infected the unthinking. No, he answers, "art is not life, but a personal interpretation of life." In a word, art is choice, and for successful choice good taste is required, and good taste may best be acquired by a classical education.

Eloquence and rhetoric come so naturally to the lips of the Spaniard, and especially of the Spaniard of Andalucía and the East Coast, that they are in danger of abuse, eminently so when they are yoked to the service of some abstraction such as Liberty and meaningless words such as Progress. Pérez Galdós, coming to Madrid from the Canary Isles, found the political clubs spouting eloquence without ceasing, and he was careful to prick the bubble when he began to write. The younger school of writers in his wake tended to exaggerate the war on rhetoric. Literature was to be converted into bundles of dry sticks, and woe to the writer who allowed his stick to bud and flower like the rod of Aaron! Everywhere among writers a profound distrust of words manifested itself, equally fatal to the politician, the parliamentary orator and the writers of the old school.

But it was not to be expected that the compatriots of Castelar would acquiesce without protest in the gag and strait waistcoat thus imposed on them. Life and reality, they declared, can be grasped only by clothing them in forms; without some selection we can have but a whirlwind of atoms;

without the concentrating power of art, nothing really exists. Don Ricardo León, with all the ardour of youth and the ready eloquence of Andalucía, voiced this revolt, the revolt against the rebels, the plea for natural eloquence against the more artificial creed of the enemies of literary artifice. He is champion of words and forms: "the form in art will always be what endures and is essential." The vintage disappears, but the good wine grows mellow in the cellar. Don Ricardo León, as we have said, is in love with words: "my supreme pleasure lies in words," says one of the interlocutors in *La Escuela de los Sofistas*, and the speaker here, as in so much of his work, stands for the author.

Sometimes he allows himself to be carried away by this delight in words, and becomes vague and verbose; but that is not characteristic of his style, which is clear and individual, an excellent instrument for the precise expression of his thought. "The music of style is the music of the soul," he declares in *La Escuela de los Sofistas*; "The man who has depth of soul cannot be a bad stylist; his thoughts appear to be musical at their birth, and the words flow from his lips or from his pen in harmony, with a solemn rhythm and majestic eloquence." But he is also well aware that study is likewise necessary and that without discipline there can be no style, as he shows elsewhere in the same book: "The command of technique requires a severe effort, a mental discipline in which only strong and courageous artists have the will to persevere." "You write," he also says, "without knowledge of grammar or rhetoric and expect everything to be added unto you. Even those you call masters write as you do, using abstract and general terms, without knowing the concrete Castilian name of each thing" (*Casta de Hidalgos*). It is thus clear that, easy-flowing as is his style, it is

not made up merely of *palabras fáciles*, but gains precision and substance by search for the exact indigenous words: *los nombres castellanos de las cosas*.

The prose thus obtained (despite the flaw of occasional Gallicisms pointed out by the critic Don Julio Casares, "who declares that Gallicisms and Frenchified constructions swarm in his pages," and which are rather the atmosphere of the age than the result of the author's deliberate will) is so delightful that we do not wonder that the characters of his novels seem of less importance than their speeches. We are sometimes inclined to suspect that the mysticism of Don Fernando Villalaz in *El Amor de los Amores* is but a handle for the prose of Don Ricardo León. In the opening pages of *Alcalá de los Zegríes* the author himself betrays an uneasiness that the *austeridad y señorío* of Don Pedro may be out of place: "You understand but little of this conversation, Gonzalito." Don Antonio Maura noted this weakness, or strength: "nearly all [his pages] seem to be the expression of the author's spirit. Rarely does he force himself to make persons speak who are incapable of his own fine and noble diction" (Preface to *La Voz de la Sangre*).

How far is his work marred by unreality? Some of his scenes certainly are very lifelike, as that of the dying child in *Alcalá de los Zegríes*, in which the words of the child, the friend, the old grandfather with his set phrases, the grief-stricken mother and the doctor are all very natural and true. But it is not in fact a question of reality or of the degree of probability. Much in Señor Pérez de Ayala's novels is far more improbable than the most far-fetched coincidence in those of Don Ricardo León. The question is whether the writer has succeeded in imposing his vision. Clearly neither his scenes nor his characters are presented

THE NOVEL

in so high relief as those of Señor Pérez de Ayala; yet in the fascination of his style he does succeed in holding the reader. His favourite and most successful characters are those of old or elderly disillusioned but fervent and energetic *hidalgos*, spiritually keen, outspoken, true to the core: the *hidalgo* in *Casta de Hidalgos*, in whose "iron character" "tenderness was deeply hidden"; Espinel, the elderly bachelor, in *Comedia Sentimental*; Don Fernando Villalaz in *El Amor de los Amores*; Don Pedro and Don Alfonso Perez de Guzman in *Alcalá de los Zegríes*; Don Carlos de Araoz in *Humos de Rey*, for whom neither men nor things had any but a spiritual value.

Such characters are still to be found in Castile, but they are here perhaps drawn rather from the imagination and books of the past than from living models; they are "eagles of other ages who never found the heavens wide enough for the soaring flight of their Spanish wings" (*El Amor de los Amores*). On the other hand, when, in *Los Centauros*, we are given, in the author's words, "adventures and misadventures completely real and seen with my own eyes; events not imagined but observed in the corners and by-ways of Spanish life," the effect is somehow nevertheless more blurred and uncertain, and soon fades from the reader's mind, while those imaginary figures remain. He is at his best when he is describing an old-world town such as that of Santillana del Mar in *Casta de Hidalgos*, a novel which may have been equalled but has not been surpassed in interest in his subsequent work, although his style may perhaps have become purer and less laboured.

His female characters do not impose themselves to the same extent as those old *hidalgos*. Our thought returns with Espinel to his house and library at Oviedo and does not re-

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

main with his niece and the Andalusian dolls at Málaga; nor do we feel any interest in Doña Juana in *El Amor de los Amores*, with her "heart the size of an almond"; and even the essentially Spanish Angeles of *Amor de Caridad* interests us less in herself than as a contrast to Clara Taylor, the daughter of a Spanish adventuress and a weak-kneed Englishman (the psychology of the foreigners in this novel is perfectly conventional), the contrast between all that is truly Spanish and Spanish imitation of foreign ways. As a novelist Señor León may perhaps be taxed with indistinct characters and conventional scenes, and while he delights to devise noble figures on whose lips he may place the fervent outpouring of his spirit, the traditional classical Spanish realism sometimes becomes too weak and diluted in his work; the purists have even picked holes in his prose; yet, for all that, a certain magic hangs over his work, a magic which may be more easy to enjoy than to explain, but which will inexorably elude writers who do not turn, like Don Ricardo León, to the great Spanish writers and mystics of the Sixteenth Century.

§ 10. THE LYRICAL NOVEL: VALLE-INCLÁN

The influence of Don RAMÓN MARÍA DEL VALLE-INCLÁN on the younger prose-writers may be taken as a good instance, like that of Rubén Darío (to whom he is in some sense the prose counterpart) on the poets, of the sad results of mistaking an experimentalist for the head of a school. Although Señor Valle-Inclán introduced new tints and shades and cadences into Spanish prose, as Darío did into Castilian poetry, his style is very personal and defies imitation. As the recognized leader of Spanish modernist

prose, it was, however, natural that he should have his followers. Señor Valle-Inclán is essentially an artist, a poet, although it may be convenient to consider his work in verse apart from his verse in prose. His work is not voluminous, but much of it is exquisite; it is thoroughly artificial and very laborious, but the pleasure yielded by the result causes us to forget the artist's toil, and the oil of the midnight lamp becomes the dew of the morning. He takes words as a goldsmith takes silver and works it into a charming pattern. The jug or box so wrought may be empty and the beer or water are no doubt more necessary than the silver mug; yet it would be foolish to deny the value of the goldsmith's art because we can drink equally well out of plain glass.

For the lover of beautiful, artistic things, a carved chest, a Cellini salt-cellar, an ivory crucifix, the work of Valle-Inclán will always have a subtle attraction; those who prefer the affections to the sensations and wish to experience the powerful human emotions of a *Peñas Arriba* or *Angel Guerra* will look to the novels of Valle-Inclán in vain. His originality has been questioned, wrongly: he is one of the most original writers of the time; but his imagination is concerned with the details and has no large conceptions, and he requires a literary influence to set his mind working. The influence of Barbey d'Aurevilly, Maeterlinck, D'Annunzio, Eça de Queiroz has been noted in his work, and he has copied or translated whole slices of other writers. He need not fear exposure, he evidently does not, since he has taken matter not only from the Memoirs of Casanova but from a source so well known to all Spanish readers as an *episodio nacional* of Pérez Galdós, the final paragraphs of *Juan Martín el Empecinado* having clearly inspired a passage in *Gerifaltes de Antaño*.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

His profound originality consists in his rhythmical prose. In the minute attention given to the musical cadence of his sentences, he is, superficially at least, a Symbolist. In his cult of the senses he pays more heed to sound and shape and scent than to colour. He is, as it were, a sculptor of miniatures. Many of his most vivid scenes we see because we first hear them: the scene of the death of the *marinerito*, with the sharp *alto, date, alto* recurring throughout, in *Los Cruzados de la Causa*, or that in which Agila knocks Tía Rosalba down the stone steps and at her side the oil-can goes hopping with a hollow sound: “Rodó la vieja con ruido mortecino, y a su lado la alcuza iba saltando hueca, metálica y clueca” (*Gerifaltes de Antaño*). So it is always the sound that gives the significance to the following passages: “Fray Ambrosio coughed cavernously, and in the depths of the house still sounded the confused murmur of the woman’s voice, and in moments of silence, the ticking of a clock like the heart-beats of that monastic house ruled by an old woman surrounded by cats: tac-tac, tac-tac. It was a grandfather’s clock, with pendulum and weights showing” (*Sonata de Invierno*); “Muffled and continuous among the evergreen myrtles and bay and box came to me the plashing of the fountains” (*Sonata de Primavera*); “The light flickered. A patrol of cavalry trotted past beneath the windows” (*Gerifaltes de Antaño*); “Candelaria con la falda recogida y chocleando las madreñas andaba encorvada bajo un gran paraguas azul cogiendo rosas para el altar de la capilla” (*Sonata de Otoño*); “La vieja arrastra penosamente las madreñas en las piedras del camino” (*Flor de Santidad*); the shot Carlist falls down the rocky mountain-side: “se despeñaba rebotando contra los picachos, enfondándose en la maleza y desprendiéndose luego entre desgarraduras para

seguir botando monte abajo. Al final chapotea en el río" (*El Resplandor de la Hoguera*); the tramp of soldiers echoes through the nunnery cloisters (*Los Cruzados de la Causa*).

If Señor Valle-Inclán is in a limited sense a Symbolist, he also has a touch of that petulant audacity which marked the Romantics and sometimes takes our breath away in Victor Hugo. The magic of his style is partly derived from a variety of contrasts. In his modernist prose he writes of ancient things and he describes the artistic and luxurious with unfailing sobriety. With delicate fingers he draws scenes of horror and barbaric savagery, so that he is like Salome with the head of John the Baptist in a charger of marvellous craftsmanship, and we scarcely think of the ruthless cruelty any more than we do when we sing the words of the Psalmist, "Blessed is he that taketh thy children and dasheth them against the stones." He has a passion for the minute, the refined and exquisite, but he does not lack vigour, and is in fact a very energetic decadent.

This Galician and admirer of French and modern Italian and Portuguese writers, from whom we may expect occasional lapses from pure Castilian, is nevertheless very Spanish; this modernist writer has something *rancio* about him, so that a Spanish critic can describe his work as "modernismo refinado pero castizo." There are indeed several reasons why we cannot dismiss him as merely precious or decadent. There is an indigenous element as well as foreign imitation in his work, just as the native *cantigas de amigo* in Galicia flourished by the side of the exotic *cantigas de amor* seven centuries earlier. In painting so faithfully the Galician peasants and beggars, pilgrim, shepherdess, *saludador* and *endemoniada*, the old woman going slowly along the green paths with her nine-year-old grandson, about to begin his career as a *laza-*

rillo (a sketch repeated in *Malpocado*, one of the chapters of *Jardín Novelesco*), the retainers gathered round a blazing fire of logs and vine-prunings and whin in the vast *pazo* kitchen, he has had his reward, since these figures give his art life and vigour, stiffening pages which might otherwise have had a certain mawkish unreality and sickly languor.

In these peasant scenes he describes direct from Nature, with his usual sobriety and exactness. The details of a peasant's dress, of a country scene, of a farm-house, are limned no less exquisitely than the "tenazas tradicionales de bronce antiguo y prolija labor" or "las salas entarimadas de nogal, blancas y silenciosas, que conservan todo el año el aroma de las manzanas agrias otoñales puestas a madurar sobre el alfeizar de las ventanas" (*Sonata de Otoño*), a passage in which the rustic and aristocratic elements are deliciously blended. Spanish realism as a rule has no taint of vulgarity, and Señor Valle-Inclán can be a realist without abandoning his aristocratic style: "Under that pleasant sun, shining between showers, the peasants went along the roads. A shepherdess with crimson crossover was guiding her sheep towards the church of San Gundián, women singing came from the fountain, a weary old man goaded a yoke of cows which paused to graze in the hollows; and a white smoke seemed to rise from among the fig-trees." These few lines give us a whole series of pictures reproduced from life. Such word-pictures abound in his work, are indeed its principal charm, so that we think not only of the silver and ivory of ancient palaces but of a transparent stream gurgling under chestnut-trees in Galicia.

The scenes are astonishingly vivid, and it is perhaps his chief originality that he can be thus musical and vivid, dreamy and precise. He has something of Stevenson's style

if nothing of his spirit. He cannot create a plot, but he can create an atmosphere, the atmosphere at once sinister and ingenuous, a combination of mysticism and villainy, in *Flor de Santidad*, or of cynicism and rapt enthusiasm in the novels of the second Carlist War. In this atmosphere the figures and scenes stand out in sharp relief. The great and barbarously magnificent figure of the Galician *vinculero hidalgo*, Don Juan Manuel Montenegro (one may compare his Asturian counterpart in Señor Pérez de Ayala's sketch of Don Rodrigo Castañeda in *El Ombligo del Mundo*) and his sons, especially Cara de Plata, dominate much of his work and prevent it from being merely a succession of exquisite vignettes; they appear, for instance, in *Sonata de Otoño* and *Los Cruzados de la Causa* and fill with their presence the dramatized novels *Romance de Lobos*, *Aguila de Blasón* and *Cara de Plata*, the *comedias bárbaras* enveloped in terror and mystery, in which lords and peasants appear now plunged in darkness as souls in pain, now outlined fiercely against the light, or flickering as distorted shadows thrown by a balefire.

Don Juan Manuel, when he appears in the *Sonatas*, eclipses the hero of those four strange prose poems, the Carlist, Catholic dandy Marqués de Bradomín, as completely as Santa Cruz eclipses the other figures in *Gerifaltes de Antaño*. This presentment of the Carlist *cabecilla* shows not only the consummate artist but a keen psychologist and, if not historical, is at least eminently convincing: "He felt love and hatred spring up as he passed, but when he looked into the depths of his soul, all his actions appeared equal, links of a single chain. That which inspired love in some hearts inspired hate in others, and the chief passed through fire and pillage, longing for peace to come to those villages set in the moist, green countryside, in which men's life was ordered by the sound of

bells ringing, as they went to work in the fields, as they dined, as they covered up the fire with ashes or carried bundles of grass to the mangers. His cruelty was that of a husbandman who lights a fire to destroy the pests of his vineyard. He watched the smoke go up like a sacrifice, in serene hope of vintage in the day of the Lord, under the golden sunshine and the voice of those bells of ancient bronze."

The trilogy of the Carlist War, with *Sonata de Otoño* (not for its story but for its sketch of Don Manuel and the incidental descriptions of Galicia) and *Flor de Santidad*, a little masterpiece which gives a wonderful picture of Galicia and its peasants, a succession of real figures amid visions and charms and incantations against a background of grey rocks and maize-fields, meadows and dark pinewoods, form Señor Valle-Inclán's best prose work. The few pages of *Gerifaltes de Antaño* alone, the third volume of the Carlist trilogy, but constituting, like its predecessors, an independent novel, although some of the figures of *Los Cruzados de la Guerra* and *El Resplandor de la Guerra* reappear in it, are crowded with pictures etched with such delicacy and charm that they refuse to fade from the memory. The book is in fact a series of tiny masterpieces, not the less effective for being so minute: the barbarous punishment of the aged Marquesa de Redín, the scene of the three drunken old Navarrese peasants, the murder of Egoscué and the discovery and burial of his body, the supper in the farm kitchen, the meeting between Agila and the mystic shepherd Ciro Cernín in the garret, the night scene between Santa Cruz and the dying *cabecilla* Don Pedro Mendiá. Mystery, reality and romance are here most admirably mingled. "Don Diego Elizondo se quitó las antiparras y descubrió los ojos estriados de sangre que tenían una ex-

presión carnicera." Realism could no further go, but there is also constant elimination, choice, restraint. "Then he fell asleep and dreamed like a child in the angelical gold of the dawn"; but the dream is not given, although a Naturalist writer would have welcomed the opportunity for a description of pages, each line of which would inevitably diminish the effect.

It is strange that after such an achievement as this trilogy of novels Señor Valle-Inclán should not have turned back to his native Galicia (the scene of the first volume only is Galicia, that of the other two, as that of *Sonata de Invierno*, being Navarre) and given us many other marvellous sketches of peasant life, drawn with a sure instinct for the significant, the dramatic as well as the poetical detail; all the more that he had amply proved in these novels of the Carlist War that his style had nothing to fear, had rather everything to gain from close contact with reality. But we must be content with what we have, and perhaps criticism was partly to blame, in not earlier recognizing in *Flor de Santidad*, still sometimes unaccountably neglected, a masterly combination of poetry and realism.

Galician writers as a rule are as keen-sighted as they are lyrical, and Señor Valle-Inclán unites love of concrete and minute design with a vague atmosphere of dreams, visions, miracles and mystery. That, no doubt, is part of his method of suggestion. He hovers on the fringes, and is at home in the mists and murmuring shadows and haunted hills of Galicia, with its mystics and visionaries, its pilgrimages and superstitions, or in describing the peasants in their dreamy vagueness, sudden ecstasies, distraught fancies and crafty stealth. He can admirably sketch guerrilla tactics and

marches; he could not or would not describe a pitched battle. There is a refined cruelty, an element of inhumanity, in many of the scenes of this decadent primitive; but he sympathizes with his peasants, so that they are humanly as well as artistically presented, and this gives substance and truth to his work, in which the more aristocratic figures such as Agila or the Marqués de Bradomín appear, for all their cunning artistry, rather as puppets in the author's hands; they live and move clearly enough, but it is somehow as though we were watching their movements through depths of transparent green sea. On the other hand, his peasant figures are pre-eminently real and succeed in revealing

el arcano secreto de las cosas
que parecen vulgares y son maravillosas.

Had he limited himself to describing for us the interior of a Galician *pazo* or the paths of an Italian garden, he might have been considered an exquisite but insubstantial stylist; had he only described Don Juan Manuel, or Cara de Plata ruthlessly shooting a sea-gull, or Agila pushing an old lady down a flight of stone steps, or such scenes as the burial of Egoscué or the singeing and blinding of the ex-sacristan Roquito up the chimney, we might have accused him of heartlessness and insincerity; but in a crowd of humble figures we not only come nearer to reality but perceive a greater sincerity in this poet's art. "Un viejo vestido de estamcña apoyó tres dedos sobre la frente calva y luciente: Esquenciérame del todo, señorín." It is because so lifelike a picture is conveyed in so few words that Señor Valle-Inclán's novels can contain a whole country-side in a few pages, and his art thus eludes those who would copy its haunting music and choice

THE NOVEL

archaic words without attaining its grasp of the essential, the significant, its genius for selecting and omitting.

§ 11. RAMÓN PÉREZ DE AYALA AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVEL

Some critics have maintained that Don RAMÓN PÉREZ DE AYALA is chiefly a poet and that he should have continued to write poetry, such as that of *La Paz del Sendero* and *El Sendero Innumerable*, in which, with *ancho ritmo, clara idea*, he combined imitation of the Modernists and French Symbolists with thought and style of his own and achieved not perfect art but occasional beauty, lonely flowers glowing in a surrounding harshness, in an intermittently successful groping towards the light: “en las cerradas madras del ventanuco los nudos del pino brillaban redondos y purpúreos como cerezas mojadas.” If we had but the novels which appeared between these two volumes of verse, *Tinieblas en las Cumbres*, *A. M. D. G.*, *La Pata de la Raposa*, and *Troteras y Danzaderas*, we might feel disposed to agree with these critics, since none of these novels is a masterpiece, being rather a series of sketches loosely put together. But the work of the author during the last ten years has triumphantly demonstrated his power as a writer of novels and leads one confidently to expect more from him in the future than perhaps from any other living Spanish writer.

Evidently he suffers from an artistic dissatisfaction which, far from being barren, is a constant incentive to higher achievement. Given a classical education by the Jesuits, against whom he rebelled in *A. M. D. G.*, he also possesses an excellent knowledge of modern languages and is deeply read in English literature. But he has never made the mistake of

neglecting the classical literature of Spain itself, and in fact, although here and there in his poetry and prose one may discover passages imitated from foreign writers, this Asturian is the most Spanish and Castilian of novelists.

The humour, keen observation and directness of his earlier novels proved him the lineal descendant of the picaresque Spanish novelists of the Sixteenth Century. With a more or less transparent veil of decency, he is determined, like Sterne or Mr. George Moore, to express in words whatever may occur to his mind, without any of the insinuation or vicious refinements of a Boccaccio. His writing is bare, not base. With a strong gift for description, his real study has always been of man, his interest is in psychology. In his later novels these qualities are seen in combination with a more tolerant spirit, a deeper insight into character, a broader humanity, maturer thought, more substance, intensity and cohesion. In his outspokenness, his power to imprint incidents vividly on the mind and to make his characters interest the reader from the first moment they are set before him, he belongs to the true tradition of Spanish realism. We remember Tía Anastasia and Josefina and Don Medardo in *La Pata de la Raposa*, Padre Atienza or the old servant Teodora in *A. M. D. G.*, Verónica in *Troteras y Danzaderas*. The story of *Los Trabajos de Urbano y Simona* is very improbable, but we are persuaded that it happened.

We have only to compare this novel with *Troteras y Danzaderas* in order to realize the immense progress made in ten years. The earlier novel contains striking incidents, but they are somewhat crude and disconnected. It is longer and less intense, although the portrait of the poet Teófilo Pajares is convincing, as is that of his mother, Doña Juanita. The later novel is saner, more concentrated, more artistically one,

THE NOVEL

and we see in it very strongly that power of combining poetry and reality, the comic and the tragic, which we may like to attribute to the influence of English literature but which is also eminently Spanish and springs really from a cleansing and harmonizing sense of humour which is both Spanish and English. Three short *novelas poemáticas*, *Prometeo*, *Luz de Domingo*, and *La Caída de los Limones*, dealt abundantly in the tragic, with a gleam of humour here and there. The end of *Prometeo*, a striking modern version of the meeting of Odysseus and Nausicaa, is almost as grave a moral in eugenics as to think who were the parents of Beethoven.

With all the merits, and defects, of his earlier work, it is in three later novels chiefly that one finds good reason to expect from his pen in the future some masterpiece of ripe philosophy, mature style and profound characterization. We will hope, too, for regional novels (his best work is always connected, however distantly, with Asturias), of which we have a foretaste in the description of the Asturian farm in *Los Trabajos de Urbano y Simona* or of the *casa solariega* in *El Ombligo del Mundo* and in the Asturian stories of *Bajo el Signo de Artemisa*; although in so virile and Castilian a writer we may be sure that description of scenery will always be subordinated to the human interest of the characters. The chief characters of *Belarmino y Apolonio* are two cobblers in the ancient Asturian city of Pilares. This may not sound very promising, but one of them, Belarmino Pinto, is a philosopher, and a philosopher with a special language of his own invention, and an only daughter; the other, Apolonio Caramanzana, is a poet, a dramatic poet, with an only son. The two fathers are bitter foes and rivals, but fortune and reconciliation smile on them in the final scene, a matter of some consequence to the reader, who has become, despite

himself, deeply interested in their welfare. There are humour and human sympathy, thought and powerful character-drawing, in this book. The minor characters, the duchess, the Frenchman, the old maid, the Dominican, are all real and memorable.

The same qualities are abundantly evident in *Luna de Miel*, *Luna de Hiel*, and its continuation, *Los Trabajos de Urbano y Simona*. Every character is clearly defined and living from the very first: the formidable and tremendous Doña Micaëla, her husband good Don Leoncio, the philosopher Don Cástulo, the charming old aristocrat Doña Rosita (the conversations between her and Don Cástulo are full of humour); the resolute Conchita, the old doctor Don Arcadio, the centaur Paolo, the ingenious Pentámetro. Urbano and Simona have been brought up in complete innocence, with comical results. The narrative, clean and direct, is told with pathos and humour, in a style of pure and vigorous Castilian prose.

The realistic but poetical scene after the death of Doña Rosita is admirable in its sadness and incongruous beauty: "Doña Rosita had just died, quietly in her familiar arm-chair, her arms resting on a small table, not far from the open window, through which came the shiver of ancient trees and the scent of the jalap flowers. Simona was there, half unconscious, decked with the heavy ancient jewels, the diadem and necklace, the earrings and bracelets, and the thick rings with which her grandmother had adorned her shortly before she died. As the girl trembled the gems tinkled together and in the light of the lamp glowed and glittered fitfully. Conchona was there, the strong and loyal servant, firm as a castle, as she described herself, the only pillar that remained standing in that ancient house so suddenly overthrown; the only stout heart in that moment of grief and despair. Cerezo was

there, the great mastiff, his head resting on the lap of his dead mistress, his moist eyes blinking. There too on the broad nuptial bed were the white dress of brocade and the white veil embroidered with thread of silver in which Doña Rosita had been married and had desired to be buried also."

The balcony lark and nightingale scene between Urbano and Simona in *Luna de Miel*, *Luna de Hiel* is not a mere imitation from *Romeo and Juliet*. It has a poetry and reality of its own, as has the later scene, in *Los Trabajos de Urbano y Simona*, in which Urbano romantically carries off his own wife from the penitentiary to which the seven sisters had sent her. In these three novels, although some of the pages of the last two might have been written by Don Miguel de Unamuno, Señor Pérez de Ayala shows a strong originality. He belongs to the realistic school, but to Spanish realism, which gives to the strange and fantastic a clear and concrete expression, binding it definitely within the limits of the visible and living and, in dislike of vagueness, fitting the ideal into the real.

His characters, perhaps too intellectually reasoned, are nevertheless convincing. We accept the seven weird sisters, Praxedes, Onofre, Leonidas, Arsenia, Sulforiana, Trifonia and Degollación, as readily as if they were Señor Pérez de Ayala's maiden aunts. They did not like their names, but then "they were furious with everything that happened to them." Into their hands came the hapless, dovelike Simona. The sisters are as astute as they are malevolent, and when Urbano one Sunday follows Simona to church, Simona the girl-wife from whom he had been separated by his autocratic mother, the result is nothing but exasperation of the seven furies who were her escort:

"But Sulforiana, who was the most spying and suspicious

of the seven spinsters, seeing that Simona had turned her head, looked in that direction and saw Urbano there with eyes lowered, in an attitude of reverent devotion, the hypocrite! She whispered cautiously to the other sisters and pointed out Urbano to them with her finger. Several of them seized Simona under the arms and almost without touching the paved floor, flying away, like bats, without a sound, they departed."

Other characters, who play a more commonplace or minor part, are nevertheless brought vividly before us with the economy of a true artist, by a single phrase or epithet. It is this sureness and restraint which give to the style its strength and substance and carry us back to the novelists of Spain's golden age in the Sixteenth Century. A gallery of portraits, drawn with the firm hand of a Velasquez, with a delightful background of scenery, and a host of minor figures etched as pitilessly as those of Goya, will be the valuable contribution of Señor Pérez de Ayala to modern Spanish literature. Part of that contribution, and no mean one, is already to hand, but Señor Pérez de Ayala is a writer who develops rapidly, and we may be sure that he has more than one card up his sleeve. The novelist who is interested and interests others in his characters is sure of a permanent place in literature when those who depend on strained incidents have relapsed into obscurity. Character sketches such as that of Don Cristóbal in *Exodo (Bajo el Signo de Artemisa)* are not easily forgotten.

§ 12. THE SYMBOLIST NOVEL: GABRIEL MIRÓ

Belonging to the Generation of 1898, or to a younger branch of it (his novel *La Mujer de Ojeda* was mentioned by the aged and ever alert Valera in 1901), GABRIEL MIRÓ

has been variously described as a disciple of Azorín or of Señor Valle-Inclán, as an Impressionist or as a Symbolist. Born, like Azorín, on the East coast (he is a native of beautiful Alicante of the clear sky and transparent sea), he resembles him in the subjects chosen, apparently commonplace lives and little philosophers of small ancient cities and provincial towns, while he has the less philosophic but more poetical temperament of Señor Valle-Inclán. But Señor Miró, although undoubtedly a Symbolist in style, need not be too accurately placed in relation to other writers. He is Miró, with a strong individuality of his own. His style, with its wealth of strange, artificial but indigenous, carefully chosen words, its concentration, its accumulation of brief co-ordinative clauses, its syncopated metaphors, is striking and original. Somehow it resembles the work of a goldsmith striving to achieve an artistic pattern, but the material beneath his hand is too rich and the lines become blurred.

A first reading of *Nuestro Padre San Daniel* may leave this impression of vague richness, of figures and things struggling to emerge from a morass: "fragmentarias visiones de una suntuosidad letárgica." But one perhaps realizes that the blurred effect is due to one's own obtuseness. In this style, which has many points of resemblance with that of the *Culteranos*, while one may rejoice in the precision and admirable choice of its common or archaic words, one has continually to pause. For instance, in *Nuestro Padre San Daniel* we came upon the phrase, "Bajo un almendro serrado de cigarras" (Beneath an almond-tree *sawn* by cicadas). This at first pulls the reader up; it ends by convincing him, since it does very exactly describe the unceasing sound of the cicadas on a cloudless summer-day. But meanwhile, although

we may admit that the fault is the reader's, not the writer's, there has been an inartistic interruption. But Señor Miró is saved by his clearness of vision and by his love of Nature, his almost fascinated love of Nature in its beauty and its cruelty. When his rich style, the choice words, the symbols and images, are applied to things of the imagination or to the reconstruction of history, the result may be too heavy and cloying. On the other hand, when it describes the simple things of everyday life, the style can, by its careful vocabulary and artistic insight, bring out and heighten the reality without spoiling its simplicity.

As an instance of excessive richness which diminishes the effect of *Figuras de la Pasión del Señor* we may take the description of a meal: "Pasteles de setas y especias, cecina de jabalí umbriano, madreperlas y mariscos cogidos en el creciente de la luna, mirlos rellenos de pistachos, pavos-reales lardeados, uvas ahumadas, y tarros de licor de almezas y de vinos como almibares traídos en odres de nieve." We may compare this with another catalogue, in a slightly later book, *El Angel, El Molino, El Caracol del Faro*: "se van asomando las higueras, que esparcen el olor de pámpano y de tronco de leche; una palmera torcida desperezándose; un naranjo redondo; arcadas de una glorieta de mirto; jarrones con cactus inmóviles; almenas de boj; un ciprés claustral como un índice que se pone en los labios de los huertos para que todo calle, menos el agua, las frondas, las abejas, los pájaros, las horas de las torres que nadan en el azul, los cánticos de los gallos, las pisadas de los caminantes, los vuelos de los palomos; todo calla menos el silencio." The first list is artificial and composite, the second simple and natural; and the second is Señor Miró's later manner, in which he can conceal his art and provide treasures which satisfy without sating.

Midway between those two catalogues comes the list of way-side flowers in *Nuestro Padre San Daniel*.

Some of his most characteristic scenes are at once beautiful and cruel: the pigeon shot in a cloudless afternoon sky above the green waters (*Libro de Sigüenza*); the muzzled eagle soaring to the blue depths of heaven (*El Angel, El Molino, El Caracol del Faro*); the *corderet* killed in a *masia* in the mountains of Alcoy: "El cordero miraba a Sigüenza; le miraba dilatando las pupilas donde se copió un momento el alborozo del paisaje"; the white dog drowned in the crystalline Mediterranean: "un perrito blanco, jovial, ganoso de bullicio y fiestas según brincaba para lamer las manos de los muchachos." But the sea was so still and so transparent: "Si ha sido sin querer! Le queríamos mucho; pero estaba la mar tan quieta y tan clara que sin pensarlo, pues. . . ." The Azorinesque figure of Sigüenza observes and meditates on all these things.

Figuras de la Pasión del Señor is a splendid achievement, a reverent, vivid, powerful reconstruction of the Passion, from which the reader will turn with relief to the even more effective simplicity of the Gospels, but which nevertheless more than holds its own when compared with similar reconstructions in German, English and Italian. There are similar scenes in *El Humo Dormido*: "El Señor sale de Bethanía, y sus vestiduras aletean gozosas en el fondo azul del collado. Es un vuelo de la brisa que estaba acostada sobre las anémonas húmedas y la grama rubia de la ladera; y se ha levantado de improviso como una bandada de pájaros que huyen esparciéndose porque venía gente; pero reconocen la voz y la figura del amigo, y acuden, le rodean y le estremecen el manto y la túnica." Evidently it is a style that one must appreciate gradually. In his later books one can see that he is

content to shed much of his artifice and is working more and more towards a limpid presentation of reality unobstructed by a too luxuriant style, while in a single sentence of delightful prose he can frame a whole picture: "sus sandalias rotas chafan los lirios más azules, las asfodelas más encendidas" (*El Humo Dormido*). Admirable indeed is the little sketch entitled *Un Camino y el Niño del Maiz*: the road between walled gardens with their gates and little wooden doors, the gardens asleep in the drowsy blue afternoon, the sound of children at play, the echoing footsteps of a man passing up the road; the whole sketch occupies little over five hundred words, of which there is not one out of place, and is of a charmingly suggestive simplicity. Even in his more ambitious earlier work there is no denying his artistic power, and one would ask the critic to read twice or thrice before condemning.

We will not perhaps expect this writer, any more than Azorín or Valle-Inclán, to develop into a great novelist; but as a gifted artificer, a prose poet, the poet of sound and silence, an author of essays and sketches, skilfully embossed figures of men and things, we may look to him for an inspired vision of reality, seen from a new angle. The commonest things seem, indeed, to become clothed with newness under his hand: "Vi en las tolvas las olivas verdes y enteras que aun traían impresión de frescura de árbol" (*Niño y Grande*); "la hora de la siesta; inmóviles y verdes los frutales del huerto místico; el huerto entornado bajo la frescura de las sombras; la calle, dormida; todo como guardado por un fanal de silencio que vibraba de golondrinas, de vencejos, de abejas" (*El Humo Dormido*); "mar de un azul fosco, hinchado"; "Surgió un barco. Es posible que no fuera blanco; pero lucía candentemente como cincelado de sol y

de blancura" (*El Angel, El Molino, El Caracol del Faro*); "subía un muro de cipreses sobre un cielo tenue"; "Mañana de Domingo. Todo tierno, jugoso, iluminado despues de un sábado de lluvia" (*Neustro Padre San Daniel*); "Todo azul: la faz de las albercas, la de los céspedes, las sombras de las estátuas, los misterios de los jardines" (*Figuras de la Pasión del Señor*). If we have not so clear a recollection of the persons in these books, they are nevertheless there as a connecting link, and sometimes they succeed in achieving a delightful individuality.

The tragic explosion at Santander which called forth the last work of Pereda was the occasion of the first appearance of another novelist of the Mountain, CONCHA ESPINA, whose earliest novels, however, did not appear until some years later: *La Niña de Luzmela, Despertar para morir* and *Agua de Nieve*. Her best novel, *La Esfinge Maragata*, is not of the Mountain, but the subject-matter had been studied carefully, and her trained observation and psychological insight, when given, as in this case, good material to work upon, produce results both charming and natural. On the other hand, *El Metal de los Muertos*, which gives free play to her gift of observation and powerful description, contains much that is false and leaves no strong impression as a story, which is sacrificed to its author's socialistic tendencies, although one remembers the tragic atmosphere and also the contradiction between its high-flown humanity and the exaltation of an anarchist act of murder at the end. The story here is, in fact, but a peg on which to hang such opinions and detailed description of the quicksilver mines at Almadén. "And the girl knelt down, overcome." Why? Merely in order that the author may be able to continue the description.

She is more at home in the Montaña scenes of *La Rosa de*

los Vientos. The characters are here delicately and clearly drawn: the romantic Soledad who tells the story; her fanciful capricious mother, the excellent Don Germán, tragic Doña Matilde, the still more tragic Isabel (with reminiscences perhaps of the "grey woman" of *Peñas Arriba*), her mariner son Agustín. The storm scene is based rather on that of *José* than on that of *Sotileza*, and one may note that it is watched through the windows of a drawing-room. For her characters the authoress depends, often with excellent results, on her own observation; for her incidents, and occasionally for her descriptions, she depends on imagination fed on the reading of novels: *al través de la literatura novelesca*, as Soledad confesses; and this gives to much of her work a strained and artificial air which is not diminished by her high-flown style. It is, no doubt, not easy to maintain the level of a high tragic vein. In *El Caliz Rojo*, for instance (a novel which derives whatever interest it may possess from the fact that its heroine is the Soledad Fontenebro of *La Rosa de los Vientos*, now deserted by her husband and wooed in vain by a Spanish Jew in Germany), in such dialogue as the following: "This morning I saw the sun rise.—You know that in this country it is feminine—Yes; it seemed to me a great burning cup, the divine chalice of a woman's heart—Mine?—Soledad," the tragic vein comes perilously near dissolving in laughter.

Resort is accordingly had to the use and abuse of verbs in the present tense and to *culteranismo* such as "Las arrogancias de la galantería arden en lumbres de misericordia cuando el poeta se despide de su amiga con suspiradas frases" (*La Esfinge Maragata*) or "cándida en la boca la blancura de los dientes, fresco el rumor de aquel pálido regocijo" for "laughter" (*El Caliz Rojo*); so that occasionally the style

might fairly be described, in the words of the good colonel who characterizes that of Soledad, as "twisted, obscure, insufferable." On the other hand, Doña Concha Espina's style has very great merits, which fully compensate for any such defects. It is pure Castilian (the use of *sable* for "sand" is of Asturias and the Montaña, not a modern Gallicism); and the determination to provide the exact word for each object and its component parts results in a vocabulary rich, fascinating and original, although no doubt at times, as in passages of *El Metal de los Muertos*, it may become actually overwhelming, so that one may wonder whether one is in a novel or a dictionary. Such words as *gromo*, *cloque*, *estrobo*, *rucho*, *gluma*, give vigour and precision and are examples of the exact correspondence of the written word to the thing seen. When the word has to correspond to the thing felt or imagined, the effect is more artificial and of more doubtful value, as in the use of adjectives such as *veril*, *sativo*, *sápido*, *ignívomo*, *fébrido*, *furente*.

In *La Esfinge Maragata* idyll and reality are most happily mingled; the characters, Mariflor, the heroine; the country girl Olalla, the youthful shepherd Rosicler, the young priest Don Miguel, the overworked dour good-hearted Ramona, are most lifelike, genuine and attractive; the dialogue is very natural; the descriptions of the poor homes, the *maragato* customs and traditions, the account of a wedding or a *filandón*, are full of interest and charm. The wealth of detail in these natural scenes has not the over-powering effect of the more cramped artificial atmosphere in *El Metal de los Muertos*. There is life and movement, often admirably conveyed, as to the description of the pigeons as they flutter down to the scattered grain: "Zura, zura, zurita. Se remecen los nidos en el palomar, y, fuera, un lozano batir de alas azota la luz;

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

en parejas veloces acude el bando entero a picar en las manos de la muchacha: hay palomas con rizos; las hay con toca, con moño, con espuelas; las hay grises, verdosas, azuladas, plumizas; algunas lucen el collar blanco, otras el pico de oro, otras las patas de luto; aquellas los reflejos metálicos en la pechuga, en las alas, en las plumitas del colodrillo." We accept this with a good grace; it makes us see the light on their many-hued necks and the motion of their wings.

But when the catalogue is of inanimate things, we are inclined to rebel, and wish to escape as from a museum to the fresh air of heaven: "Como en un portentoso muestrario, duras, firmes, volcánicas, estan aquí las piedras más distintas: de luna, de sol, de chispa, de cruz, de rayo, de toque, de sangre, de águila; piedra loca, piedra sensible, de las amazonas, del engaño, de lumbre, de lidia, de cirzón. Las hay ondulosas y brillantes como los ojos de los tigres; talladas, con radios luminosos; pulidos, con reflejos metálicos; sedañas, con lustre adamantino; translúcidas, tornasoles, prismáticas; vestidas con tintes verdegay, verdemar, carmesí, blanco de perla, rojo de aurora, azul de labanda, amarillo de oro, de limón, de azufre, de miel." We have the impression that this is less art than the gathering of materials for art.

As has been hinted in referring to the use of nouns and adjectives, more felicitous in the former than the latter, Doña Concha Espina's gift is rather for the thing seen than for the thing imagined; and if in her future novels she can avoid mines and German summer-resorts and has the opportunity to draw closer to the peasant scenes of her native Montaña, one may look for real masterpieces from her human sympathy, insight into character, power of combining poetry and realism, light and shadow, her living sense of style and her skill in constructing a plot.

II. THE DRAMA

II. THE DRAMA

§ 1. THE DRAMA AFTER 1874. ECHEGARAY

RARELY HAS even Spain, so fertile in dramatic talent, produced so many playwrights as during the period from the year 1874, when EcheGARAY gave his first play to the world. Between them they endeavoured, with many various recipes, to renew the drama's youth, but it must be confessed that the drama, emerging from this Medea's cauldron, appears more tottering and wrinkled than before. Some of the cooks, evidently, were more intent on their own spices than on the effect they might have on the patient. They might have taken warning from the fate which befell the playwrights of the first half of the Nineteenth Century. A twilight has descended on that apparently immortal galaxy. A vague halo surrounds the name of Hartzenbuseh and his *Los Amantes de Teruel* (1837); Zorrilla's survives in the ever-popular *Don Juan Tenorio* (1844); Tamayo y Baus' steadily, if less brilliantly than that of Zorrilla, in *Un Drama Nuevo* (1867) and *Locura de Amor* (1855). Bretón de los Herreros' dramatic studies of the middle classes at Madrid now have more historical than æsthetic interest; Gareía Gutiérrez, Ventura de la Vega, and Rodríguez Rubí are become little more than names.

But the triumph of the playwright, like that of the actor and orator, is none the less intense for being fugitive, and the brilliant success of one or two of their number naturally fired a crowd of emulators. The dramatist's glory may not

always be literary and enduring, but for the moment it outshines that of other writers. This was especially true of JOSÉ ECHEGARAY, whose genius was mathematical rather than poetical or literary. His importance lies less in his contribution to literature than in his influence on the development of the drama. This is how a close observer of the Spanish drama, himself a dramatist, Benito Pérez Galdós, describes the advent of Echegaray with *El Libro Talonario* (1874) and *La Esposa del Vengador* (1875), "the brilliant apparition of the genius of Echegaray on the Spanish scene": "He was as it were a thundering, flashing, hurricane which changed discreet emotions into violent passions; he broke up worn-out forms and imbued the actor's art with a new strength and new resources; he electrified the general public and threw among the critics a fearful whirlwind of fervent enthusiasms struggling with the lukewarm opinions of routine."

For the next twenty years the Spanish stage was, as it were, in a perpetual thunderstorm. Echegaray's stage effects, romantic and at times melodramatic, were tremendous, and often so skilful and impressive as to conceal their fundamental unreality. Very effective is the staging of the twilight scene between Fuensanta and Leandro: "Ha caído la tarde; es casi de noche; la habitación en sombra, por la cristalería del fondo el cielo y el mar; claridad vaga; algunas nubes" (*El loco Dios*); or the scene in the same play in which Fuensanta, wherever she turns, meets an importunate relation, watchful but indistinguishable in the darkness. Yet, sorry as one may feel for Fuensanta, neither her character nor that of Leandro has obtained sufficient hold on the reader for him to be greatly affected by Leandro's revelation to Fuensanta on their wedding-day that he is the very God.

THE DRAMA

O Locura o Santidad is dramatic, but its effects are achieved, unnecessarily perhaps, through an inherent improbability. Don Lorenzo de Avendaño, a noble figure and human, or intermittently human, dominates the play; but the atmosphere is too strained for it to be entirely convincing. Echegaray's admirers ranked him with Shakespeare in his knowledge of the human heart; but it was precisely Echegaray's weakness that his interest was in problems and effects rather than in persons, or, at most, in persons as the subject for experiment. In this characteristic, as well as in his keen intellect and unliterary style, he resembles another Basque, Don Miguel de Unamuno.

He comes nearer to earth in the *comedia de costumbres* entitled *A fuerza de arrastrarse*, a study of the heartless *ar-riviste* Plácido, who displays a strength of will worthy of nobler means to his end. His object, attained by dragging himself through the mire, brings him no pleasure. This Nemesis attending the ruthless exercise of the human will is really Echegaray's favourite topic. By inexorable will-power, he seems to say, you may succeed, but your success is likely to turn to dust and ashes in your hands:

unos gritos de dolor,
y unos copos de ceniza.

In *El Gran Galeoto* the innocence of Teodora in the face of calumny and appearances works more havoc than might have resulted from hypocritical guilt. This play may have been written *febrilmente*, but its intensity, only verging on theatricality towards the end, did not succeed in making the versification that of a poet. Nevertheless it is terse and pure, and can concentrate with epigrammatic force:

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

El hombre es ruin y traidor
y exige de la mujer
por una hora de placer
una vida de dolor;
si le mato, gana el mundo;
si me mata, gano yo;
Todo se sabe siempre (gran prodigio),
mas nunca la verdad (suerte funesta).

El Gran Galeoto was composed in his prime, and it is by its sustained success that his fame as a dramatist now chiefly lives; although the variety and amazing vitality of this dramatist, influenced in turn by writers so different as Dumas and Ibsen, were shown in the plays which he continued to write in extreme old age.

§ 2. THE DRAMA AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS: CALDÓS AND DICENTA

Contemporary playwrights of Echegaray's school were EUGENIO SELLÉS, whose best-known play is *El Nudo Gordiano* (1878), dealing with the problem of divorce, and General LEOPOLDO CANO, who failed to maintain the success won with his *Mariposa* (1878) and *La Pasionaria* (1883).

Meanwhile two important tendencies had made themselves felt: the rise of the *género chico* and the advent of the social-problem plays of Pérez Galdós and Dicenta. There are critics who have claimed for Galdós the dramatist as high a place as for the novelist; but it is difficult to see how the claim can be substantiated. The merit of his plays is that of his novels; when one of his novels is presented in the form of drama, the skill in character-drawing and the seizure on significant details is well brought out, but the effects are for the reader as

much as for the stage. We prefer to consider *El Abuelo*, *Realidad*, *Casandra*, *Bárbara*, *La Loca de la Casa* as *novelas intensas* rather than as *dramas extensos*. Indeed, Galdós pretended to be a dramatic novelist rather than a skilled playwright. "The form of dialogue," he says, "brings out the force and individuality of the characters"; but this skill in dialogue is as important in the novel as on the stage. His aim was to tread in the footsteps of *La Celestina*, which he described as "the greatest and most beautiful of spoken novels."

It cannot be denied that there is dramatic emotion in such plays as *Realidad*, *La Loca de la Casa*, *Bárbara* or *El Abuelo*, a drama in which every one of the characters is alive and natural. Other plays, such as *Electra* and *Casandra*, fruits of their author's anticlericalism and works of circumstance, have little dramatic force, although *Electra*, which so stirred Spanish life in 1901, may still be read with interest. Its temporary fame was due to a case in actual life, represented in the play by the attempt to induce Electra to enter a convent. *Resucita* is the last word of the play, spoken by Máximo, who rescues her from this fate; but *Electra* the play is unlikely to revive. In 1910 a recrudescence of the artificial anticlerical campaign gave rise to *Casandra*, which increased its author's street popularity. The subject of the play is that Doña Juana Samaniego, Marquesa de Tobalina, will leave her fortune of £80,000 to her stepson only on the condition of his separating from Casandra. He ends by murdering the "cruel fanatical old woman." But, as a critic remarked at the time, "a witless *beata* is not Clericalism" and the relatives of Doña Juana are themselves idle and covetous. There is infinitely more life in *La Loca de la Casa* than in *Electra*. In this case Victoria converts her *piEDAD desapia-*

dada of becoming a nun into the greater heroism of becoming wife of the very rough diamond Cruz, a self-made millionaire, in order to save her father from ruin. The character study of Cruz is worthy of the author of *Torquemada* and so many other living men and women.

The play by which JOAQUÍN DICENTA will always be chiefly remembered is *Juan José*; none of his later plays approached its success, and when, as in *Sobrevivirse* (the tragedy of a dramatic author who can no longer write), his study is not of workmen but bourgeois, the interest is much diminished. *Juan José* has maintained its popularity for a quarter of a century; it is a limited but intense and finished picture of workmen's lives at Madrid, in which the interest centres less in the author's obviously Radical tendencies than in the tremendous sincerity of Juan José. By this generous presentment of an ordinary workman, Dicenta laid the foundation of the social drama, leading the way in this development as Baroja did in the novel. JOSÉ LOPÉZ PINILLOS, author of the novels *La Sangre de Cristo* (1907) and *Doña Mesalina* (1910), later turned to the drama and bitterly but forcibly expressed his pessimism in the plays *Hacia la Dicha*, *El Pantano* and *Esclavitud*.

§ 3. THE GÉNERO CHICO

It might be difficult to decide whether the *género chico* should be described as having saved or killed the drama in Spain during the forty years of its predominance, roughly from 1870 to 1910. On the one hand, it bound down the drama to reality and rendered it popular and characteristic; on the other hand, it broke it into small pieces and divorced it from literature. But certainly the literary historian can-

not afford to neglect these thousands of pieces, produced at an average of over one hundred to the year, since they belong to literature almost as much as does *Lazarillo de Tormes* and quite as much as do some of the *sainetes* of Ramón de la Cruz, and provide living sketches of the customs of the people.

It was in the revolutionary year 1868 that the Teatro de Recreo at Madrid began the vogue of one-hour pieces; the success obtained with this new departure caused the movement to spread rapidly, so that in the closing years of the Nineteenth and the first years of the Twentieth Century no less than twenty theatres at Madrid were working in the *género chico*, and during forty years *zarzuelas*, *revistas líricas* and *sainetes* poured from a hundred pens. The *sainete* proper as a *cuadro de costumbres* was revived by the father of the *género chico*, TOMÁS LUCEÑO, in 1870, with *Cuadros al fresco*, *El arte por las nubes* and *El Teatro Moderno*. In the following years ever greater success attended the work of RICARDO DE LA VEGA in *Providencias judiciales* (1875), *La Canción de la Lola* (1888), *El Año pasado por agua* (1889) and especially *La Verbena de la Paloma* (1894), and of JAVIER DE BURGOS in *Los Valientes*, *Las Mujeres*, *El mundo comedia es*, *Los cómicos de mi pueblo* and *La Abuela*. These two playwrights collaborated with conspicuous success in *Hoy, sale hoy* (1884).

The success attending the first night of *La Gran Vía*, produced on July 2, 1886, by FÉLIX PÉREZ Y GONZÁLEZ, is still remembered at Madrid. Other authors of deserved popularity were MIGUEL RAMOS CARRIÓN and VITAL AZA (author of *El Sueño Dorado* and *El Señor Cura*), who collaborated in *Los Lobos Marinos* in 1887. One of Ramos Carrión's most successful hits was *Agua, Azucarillos y*

Aguardiente (1897), but it was over twenty years earlier that in his *La Marsellesa* (1876) occurred the lines which are likely to prove the most enduring of all those produced by the voluminous *género chico*:

El pensamiento libre
proclamo a alta voz,
y muera quien no piense
igual que pienso yo.

The year 1897 was marked by other successes: that of *La Viejecita*, by MIGUEL ECHEGARAY, which he followed up with *Gigantes y Cabezudos* in 1898, and that of *La Revoltosa*, written by two of the best-known *género-chiquistas* (if one may coin the word), JOSÉ LÓPEZ SILVA and CARLOS FERNÁNDEZ SHAW.

Most of these sketches owed their popularity mainly to the music of such masters as Manuel Fernández Caballero, Joaquín Valverde, Federico Chueca, Ruperto Chapí, Tomás Bretón (1850–1923), Don Amadeo Vives, Don José Serrano. Notable parodists arose in the persons of Salvador María Granés and Colonel Don Pablo Parellada, who writes under the pseudonym Melitón González. The most popular of the more recent authors, Don CARLOS ARNICHES, born at Alicante in 1866, produced *Casa Editorial* in 1888, but it was with the production of *La Leyenda del Monje* on December 6, 1890, that his real success commenced. This was followed by *Las Campanadas*, *Los Aparecidos*, *Los Puritanos*; but their author showed a capacity for development from the *zarzuela* to the more characteristic and indigenous *sainete*, and more recently to, or towards, the *comedia*. There are touches of true comedy and unforced

THE DRAMA

mirth in *La Santa de la Isidro*, *Las Estrellas*, *La Fiesta de San Antón*, *Sandías y Melones*, *Los Chicos de la Escuela*, *El Amigo Melquiádes* and many others (Señor Arniches continued for twenty years to produce pieces at an average rate of five or six a year). His fame was increased in the present century by *San Juan de Luz* (1902) and especially by *El Puñao de Rosas*, produced in the same year. In twenty-one pieces he collaborated with ENRIQUE GARCÍA ALVAREZ, another prolific writer of *zarzuelas*, and they specialized in the most outrageous plays on words (as, for instance, *en el Peloponeso: en el pelo pon eso*). García Alvarez had collaborated earlier in twenty-five pieces with ANTONIO PASO, who also wrote in collaboration with JOAQUÍN ABATI. Señor Arniches collaborated with many other well-known writers, including CELSO LUCIO, López Silva, and JACKSON VEYAN, who, although born at Cadiz, had both Aragonese and English blood in his veins, a fact which may account for his delight in puns. The *género chico* was in a very strong position and would certainly not have lost its popularity had it maintained itself at a higher level; but, when it descended into a competition in punning, abandoned the character sketch for topical allusions, and, always unliterary, ceased even to be a faithful mirror of life, its end was evidently at hand. That it should have defended itself so long, proves that it had struck deep root, since its great popularity was obviously dangerous and contained the germs of its decay, in that it lured a continual stream of new writers to attempt success by whatever choice of means. It was inevitable that it should eventually succumb to the *género ínfimo*, that is to say, to the disintegrating forces of which it had itself been a manifestation, while the writers of real merit whom it had made famous necessarily disso-

ciated themselves from the vulgar throng and turned to pastures new.

§ 4. THE MODERNIST DRAMA: BENAVENTE

The great vogue of Echegaray was on the wane and Galdós, followed by Dicenta, was writing his dramatic novels with a thesis when the great Spanish modernist playwright, Don JACINTO BENAVENTE, presented his first play, *El Nido Ajeno*, in 1894. The new dramatist, champion of the unemphatic, who now appeared above the horizon was a man of cities, the son of a distinguished Madrid doctor, a *madrileño* rather than a Spaniard. His view from the first was cosmopolitan, and, looking across Europe and beholding the new drama of France and Belgium and Italy, he considered the time ripe to produce at Madrid plays requiring a highly educated audience such as could appreciate a theatre of ideas, understand philosophical dialogue, rejoice in ingenious and penetrating remarks, answer to suggestion, prefer irony to declamation, seize comical touches presented with the most innocent air and immediately grasp the subtlest allusions.

All this and more (for he is a poet as well as a philosopher and satirist, and although he writes in prose his first book was a volume of poems, *Versos*, published in 1893) he has provided during a whole generation (for a playwright a far longer period than for a novelist) with a growing celebrity at Madrid, in Spain and abroad. To say that he is cosmopolitan is not to say that he writes mainly of foreign themes but that he writes of modern ideas as interpreted in the capital of Spain or in one of its provincial cities, the *ciudad histórica y monumental* of Moraleda. One notices

that when the scene is placed in a Scottish castle, in *Más fuerte que el amor*, no English appear: the nearest one gets to them is the remark of the Marqués de Ondarroa about taking an active part in "*la fox-hound*." The *dramatis personæ* are Spanish, with the exception of the amusingly presented Italian prince and princess.

It is possible that Señor Benavente saw in the English *chez eux* something too solid (perhaps he would say too inartistic) for his art. Shakespeare found them malleable enough. When he does introduce English in his plays, they are of the cosmopolitan variety, the enigmatic Lady Seymour in *La Noche del Sábado*, or the conventional tourist Miss Smith in *Las Cigarras Hormigas*. His other foreigners are similarly cosmopolitan, studied outside their own country, as the Frenchman Adolphe at Madrid in *Rosas de Otoño*. Similarly the scene of *La Honra de los Hombres* is Iceland, but its subject is Spanish. A better indication of the foreign elements in Señor Benavente's art will be found in the literary references scattered through his plays. Beyond a passing allusion to Cervantes, Calderon or Gracian, one will look for Spanish literature in vain. On the other hand, references to foreign modern authors are frequent: Anatole France, Pierre Loti, Daudet, Byron, "the divine" Shelley, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Tennyson, Rudyard Kipling, D'Annunzio, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Tolstoi; and he has translated or adapted plays of Shakespeare and Molière. The work of Dumas and of contemporary French playwrights has influenced him largely, although this influence has been corrected in part by his love and admiration for Shakespeare. In reading Benavente one may think sometimes of Maurice Donnay or Alfred Capus, of D'Annunzio, or Maeterlinck, never of any earlier Spanish dramatist. Señor Benavente

presents the relations of the individual to modern society and modern civilization. He moves amid pianolas, gramophones, telephones and motor-cars and can paint to the life the aristocracy, and even more accurately the middle classes of Spain. The Dickensian traits of Galdós' *madrileño* characters disappear in Benavente's plays, which are far better fitted to the stage than any play by Galdós, although the characters may be less strongly marked. There is in fact perhaps a little sameness about the characters, despite the author's abundant variety and versatility. The style, too, fluent and adaptable, is apt to be a trifle colourless and monotonous, and his prose loses but little in translation, although it can occasionally attain a rainbow charm, as in this passage from *Cuento de Amor*, adapted from *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*: "El jardín es todo risa; rien las flores, rien las fuentes, y hasta las estatuas de marmol que le adornan entre los juegos del agua y a las caricias del sol y de la sombra trémula del follaje, parecen animadas y sonrientes. Mis cascabeles animan como sonajas de pandereta esta canción de la vida triunfante, y yo corro y salto para que suenen más los cascabeles y brillen al sol; a ese sol, magnífico soberano, que vistió el jardín como a mí de colorines y cascabeles de oro; y como yo con mis chanzas y mis canciones alegre la vida, el jardín, bufón de la primavera, canta, ríe y cascabelea, con luces y perfumes y surtidores y aleteos de pájaros y mariposas."

Señor Benavente's enemies say that he has effected a fatal revolution, killing real drama and great acting. There is some truth in the accusation. When Agamemnon treads the purple to his doom, or Abner says *Oui, je viens dans son temple adorer l'Éternel*, they are at once raised, as it were, into statues and receive an outward magnificence; yet how liv-

ing and human they remain after three and after twenty-five centuries! No one is going to compare the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus with *El Nido Ajeno*; but one cannot help wondering whether in Señor Benavente's intellectual, sceptical art the absence of outward show and nobility, the absence also of faith and reverence, is not responsible for that lack of repose which makes his plays fluent as water but also as fugitive and unstable. Had one to give the characteristic quality of his art in one word, one would say that it is agility; both mental agility (less surprising in a Murcian *madrileño* than in a Basque like Señor Unamuno) and agile skill in construction; for this playwright, however undramatic, is versed in all the ways of the stage, having been himself an actor and closely connected with the theatre all his life.

In a sense, agility must necessarily kill drama, which is the clash between two rigid uncompromising rights, principles and powers. Sometimes in his plays there is a dramatic background, as in *Por las Nubes*, a poignant sketch of educated *miseria*, among the middle class at Madrid (the clouds have floated higher since the play was produced). The resolution of Julio to strike out for happiness and independence is contrasted here with the more timid love of his mother, Doña Carmen (we may compare the conflict between mother and son in Martínez Sierra's *La Torre de Marfil*); the trammels and conventions of the life around him stifle the life of the heart, and his mother has to yield; the play ends with the words of the good Dr. Hilario: "There is something more sacred than a grave: a cradle; there is something greater than the past: the future." Here the characters are presented with the naturalness usual in Señor Benavente's plays, and the drama has more definiteness than is usual. As a rule his motto is *N'appuyez pas*. The directions for a

speech in *El Nido Ajeno* read: "Above all, a solemn, declamatory tone must be avoided."

Señor Benavente's aim is to amuse, sometimes to edify, occasionally to move to tenderness and pity; but always in the tone of well-bred persons conversing in a drawing-room, without overemphasis or violence. He is constantly pleasant and *ameno*, and at times charming, but does not as a rule rouse great emotions. His characters may not declaim, but they have plenty to say, and often develop their theories and ideas at great length, so that they interrupt the action of the play. In order to counteract this defect, the play is often given no action to be interrupted. The author is aware of his weakness for these disquisitions (which by the reader at least are not resented, for many of the speeches are carried off with a lightness of touch which disarms criticism). The lengthy monologues of Don Hilario in *Por las Nubes* may be trying to actors and audience, but they do not weary the reader; and the same is true of Crispin's speeches in *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada*. In *La Escuela de las Princesas* the dissertations of Prince Alberto are kept within bounds. In other plays the author himself alludes to "those lucubrations" (in *El Nido Ajeno*) or to the "admirable loquacity" of Doña Trinidad (*Los Buhos*), while Federico's utterances in *Las Cigarras Hormigas* are described as resembling a leading article.

We are led to suspect that the playwright is more enamoured of his ideas than of the persons in whom they are incarnated. "Who knows," says Germán in *El mal que nos hacen*, "if the world is not, after all, nothing but a great chess-board on which superior beings play their game as we do with the chess-men." Señor Benavente sometimes appears to be usurping the part of those gods and to be playing

THE DRAMA

coldly at chess and moving his pawns with a bewildering rapidity. But if his persons sometimes seem puppets, *figuras del ajedrez*, in his hands, his marionettes, frankly described as "dolls and puppets of rags and cardboards," assume to our surprise real flesh and blood. The figures of *Los Intereses Creados* are, as he claims in the prologue to its continuation, *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada*, "a living imitation of real persons."

Los Intereses Creados is a brief comedy which develops the simple but profound plan of the aspiring youth who informed a millionaire that he was partner in a famous bank and, in order to become partner, informed the manager of the bank that he was about to marry the millionaire's daughter. But the story of Leandro, redeemed by love, and his faithful plotting henchman, Crispin, is worked out with a dramatic skill and poetic imagination which bring into the play a breath of *Romeo and Juliet* and *La Celestina* and raise it to a higher plane of art than is usual in Señor Benavente's work.

The same reality in unreality is found in his fantastic or symbolical plays. There is definite characterization in the charming fairy-tale, *El Príncipe que todo lo aprendió en los libros*, a play which may occasionally remind English readers of Stevenson's *Prince Otto*, with its ingenuous prince and pedantic tutor; it is a fantasy containing ingenious thought and delicate humour, not without some delightful Benaventian absurdities, as the picture of widower Chuehurumbo throwing his three daughters at the head of the Blue Prince, or the same King Chuehurumbo's account of his unbroken twenty-five years' friendship with the prince's father, interrupted by only three wars.

Two earlier fantastic plays, as compared with *The Prince Who Learned Everything out of Books*, lose in charm what

they gain in power. The satire of *El Dragón de Fuego* is equally prominent in *La Noche del Sábado*, in which the cosmopolitan gambling society of the Riviera is presented or pilloried. The celebrated plays, *La Princesa Bebé* and *La Escuela de las Princesas*, the former an account of the rebellion of Princess Helena, the latter of the rebellion and capitulation of the Princess Constanza, like the plays just mentioned, hover between romance and reality.

We turn from these brilliant and occasionally delightful fantasies, and from the effective but sinister and melodramatic *La Malquerida* (an exception in Señor Benavente's thoroughly unmelodramatic art) to the plays of Madrid and provincial society which are the mainstay of his philosophical irony and in which he brings a most complicated mind to bear on the events of every day. He holds up the mirror to life, life as it commonly appears, and most faithfully reflects it as a passing show. He asks us to sit upon the ground not to hear sad stories of the deaths of kings but to look into our neighbours' foibles, in the Madrid which is worse than a glass house—a shop-window (*Campo de Armiño*: “*en este Madrid se vive en un escaparate*”). For him literature must be the exact representation of life, and it is perhaps by a natural reaction from this somewhat dreary creed that he takes refuge in romantic or fantastic scenes, or, without ever losing his urbanity, goes out into the villages of Castile, as in *De Cerca*. But he is thoroughly at home in sketching the aristocracy, in *Gente Conocida*, *Campo de Armiño*, *Más fuerte que el amor* or *La Comida de las Fieras*; and even more at home in painting the middle class at Madrid or in the provinces, in *Por las Nubes*, *El Marido de la Tellez*, *El Marido de su Viuva* or *La Gobernadora*. In this last play, which contains an effective bullfight scene, irony turns into

open satire of politics and corruption, satire as unmistakable as that of *Los Malhechores del Bien*, in which tyrannical charity is held up to ridicule.

Political corruption forms the background to *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada*, which has had less success than its first part, *Los Intereses Creados*. Madrid society, in more individual pictures, supplies the subject of *Rosas de Otoño*, a remarkable play in which the autumnal roses represent love between husband and wife maturing through suffering and sorrow and separation (although this cannot be achieved when, as in *Lecciones de Buen Amor*, marriage is only "playing at marriage"), and of *El mal que nos hacen*, a study of jealousy, morbid, imaginative, theoretic jealousy; while *Los Buhos* gives an amusing sketch of the learned man wrapped in his studies and of the frivolous woman of the world, and *Las Cigarras Hormigas* is a farce, a *Noche del Sábado* on a lower plane, with the scene in Spain.

Although clearly the art of Señor Benavente developed and improved, gaining a surer touch and a purer style, it would perhaps be misleading to divide the thirty years of his dramatic activity into periods. He is fertile in surprises. We will find him now in a poetical fantasy, now in a historical play of the time of Queen Elizabeth (*La Vestal del Occidente*) turning from harsh reality to idealism and from comedy to farce. *No fumadores*, a comic incident based on a chapter of Palacio Valdés' *La Hermana San Sulpicio*, comes at the same time as two plays in themselves so diverse as *La Princesa Bebé* and *Rosas de Otoño*. Or he will escape from the cosmopolitan crowd and the middle classes and aristocracy to outline the life of a humble woman of the people, as in *Una Pobre Mujer*. Señor Benavente, in fact, like the Princess Baby who flees from her surroundings, is

always escaping, and one cannot tie him down to any one phase or manner. His most abiding quality is his elusiveness; attempt to bind him and he becomes fire or sand or running water. His glance is usually oblique. His infinite variety is feminine.

It is perhaps not the aim of a theatre of ideas to produce striking characters. One remembers Crispin of *Los Intereses Creados* and *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada*; one likes and respects such slightly conventional characters as the Marqués de Ondarroa (in *Más fuerte que el amor*) or the Duque de Olalla (in *Campo de Armiño*) or Don Heliodoro (in *Los Malhechores del Bien*), the saintly Isabel of *Rosas de Otoño*, María of *El Nido Ajeno*; and for the rest one greets with a passing nod and smile a crowd of figures as they pass: the *malade imaginaire* Prince Máximo in *La Escuela de las Princesas*, the ridiculous Prince Savelli in *Más fuerte que el amor*, or the Countess Rinaldi in *La Noche del Sábado*, in which the character and tragedy of Donina leave us cold, as though in waiting for the genius of a Shakespeare to breathe into it life and passion.

In other plays, such as *El mal que nos hacen* or *Los malhechores del bien*, one remembers rather the subject than the characters, and they thus reveal the critic rather than the dramatist. But in not emphasizing his characters Señor Benavente acts deliberately. He concentrates internally. Superficially they do not seem to impose themselves, but is not this one of the ingenious traps set for us by Señor Benavente? The moral of his whole work appears to be that "things are not what they seem." The drab outward uniformity of modern civilization conceals characters as individual and passions as fierce as those of times more picturesque and primitive. He pierces beneath the surface and

THE DRAMA

the play of flowing, fugitive impressions, to hidden motives and the drama within. The two grocers in *Los Malhechores del Bien* are apparently very much alike; but the one has bad goods and a good conscience and the other good goods and no conscience at all. One must learn to read between the lines: the truth in books, as in life, always lies between the lines (*El Príncipe que todo lo aprendió en los libros*); there is a "legal truth" and "the other truth" (*Campo de Armiño*); in life, as in society, there is the official entertainment and the real entertainment behind the scenes (*La Princesa Bebé*). "For the most part, people know as much about life as they do about the theatre: they see the play, that is all; the real show goes on behind the scenes" (*La Noche del Sábado*; Eng. tr. John Garrett Underhill). Señor Benavente, it will be seen, harps on this idea. And so it is with his own plays. One comes to see more in his characters than one had at first supposed them to contain. They have a way of growing and becoming, and may prove changing, vague, inconsistent, anything except conventional stage heroes and heroines. Their commonplace appearance is deceptive. As one listens to what they say, one seems to overhear another message. The drama is not in the action but in the reactions. As his translator, Mr. Underhill, well puts it, "the foreground, boldly and carefully elaborated, serves as a screen behind which the subjective drama is developed" in this "drama of double planes."

Señor Benavente has sometimes been described as cold and exclusively intellectual, merely relieving his philosophic desert with a sentimental touch here and there. But one must not be too certain; in dealing with so subtle a writer the critic may be forgiven if he peppers his judgments with perhapses. His outlook is certainly in the main sceptical

and pessimistic, yet in *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada* he speaks out against the corroding scepticism by which each citizen considers himself the one just man in a corrupt and decadent city. No doubt when he turns from all the glare and tinsel to the happy innocence of children, that is part of his scepticism; and the optimistic flourish set at the end of some of his plays appears a little superficial. Yet his purpose and philosophy of life often seem sane and human enough. He represents his characters as shadows passing through life in search of the ideal, and the coldness of their presentation is thus a form of generosity. Love is the only reality (*La Noche del Sábado*); happiness must be sought in sacrifice (*La Escuela de las Princesas*) and is not incompatible with poverty (*La Comida de las Fieras*), while mere wealth may not have the power to produce it, as in the case of the returned "Indian" Remigio in *Alfilerazos*. Compassion may be almost as strong as love, and so may pride of race (*altivez, orgullo de raza*), as in *Más fuerte que el amor*; but "sobre el armiño de mi escudo pondré el nuevo blasón de una azucena más blanca que el armiño" (*Campo de Armiño*).

In *Los Malhechores del Bien* he shows education and government in Spain as an undermining instead of a strengthening of the will, and in *La Ciudad Alegre y Confiada* he denounces demagogy and hollow show and bombast. In *Por las Nubes* he hints at the advantages of a vigorous life in the country or as emigrant over an office life in cities. Evidently his purpose is serious; sometimes one could wish that it were a little less serious. It is not only in the realm of dramatic art that he has proved revolutionary and subversive. His scoffs at politicians' ways were not only popular but permissible and have been justified by subsequent

THE DRAMA

events; but sometimes, as in his hits at monarchy or in *Los Malhechores del Bien* (as though the results of charity for charity's sake were not often as disconcerting as those of the conditional charity which he here derides), he shows a narrowness surprising in so nimble a spirit.

The critic has to remember that Señor Benavente introduced (not into Europe but into Spain) a new drama, interesting and excellent of its kind, yet fundamentally undramatic (one of his recent plays, *La Inmaculada de los Dolores*, is even called a *novela escénica*), and certainly not to be regarded as the prototype and culmination of the drama. We can read with pleasure the work of the modern playwrights without reversing the verdict that the true drama is that of Shakespeare and Sophocles and Calderón. There is no doubt of the greatness of Señor Benavente's achievement, and beneath his versatility and scepticism, beneath the frivolous life which he portrays with an irony so skilfully veiled, beneath the flow of fleeting ideas and paradoxes, we get down to a hard bedrock of reality and perceive something of that ancient Spanish creed, the Stoic belief that only when a man possesses his own soul and masters himself can he be called happy or free.

§ 5. GREGORIO MARTÍNEZ SIERRA

Señor Benavente is concerned primarily with ideas and with skilful construction of a play round these ideas; with the younger playwright, Don GREGORIO MARTÍNEZ SIERRA, like Benavente and the great majority of Spanish dramatists, a native of Madrid, one feels that style and persons are the first consideration. One may take his play, *Primavera en Otoño* (1911), in which he perhaps purposely

challenged comparison with his master. *Rosas de Otoño* (1905) is more closely reasoned; it is philosophical where *Primavera en Otoño* is lyrical. The atmosphere of the one play is prose, of the other poetry, yet both are realistic. "All that is poetry," says Augustina. "Naturally because it is the truth," answers Juan Manuel. In *Rosas de Otoño* we are interested in the relations of Gonzalo to Isabel, as in the relations of any wife to any husband; in *Primavera de Otoño* we are interested in Elena and Don Enrique (a kind of Spanish Mr. Bennet) and do not care about all the other wives and husbands in the world. The unity of place is perfect in Señor Benavente's play; in that of Señor Martínez Sierra the scene passes from Madrid to a Cantabrian village, but the unity is not lost, owing to our interest in the characters for their own sake. The *dramatis personæ* are more numerous in *Rosas de Otoño*, more varied in *Primavera en Otoño*; those of the former are all of one class although of different countries (for the servant is merely a kind of telephone, a walking machine), those in the latter include a lady's tailor who has a good deal to say for himself and the very much alive servants Justa and Pura. In this the play is more indigenous, and it is perhaps also more universal, although less cosmopolitan; there is also more spirit and lyrical fire; on the other hand, in general psychology and subtlety and perfect control of his characters, Señor Benavente shows his masterly skill. Both plays are concerned with the gradual reconciliation between husband and wife; both are intense. In *Rosas de Otoño* the intensity is more intellectual; in *Primavera en Otoño* the intensity is of that more genuinely Spanish kind which permeates external objects as well as the mind, is compounded of heart and head (the whole man, a bundle of nerves per-

haps, but never a cold abstraction) and succeeds in spiritualizing the material elements.

It is worth while to consider the unity in Señor Martínez Sierra's plays. It is a unity, not in any Aristotelian sense, but achieved through intensity, sobriety, economy in the means employed and consistent development of the characters. In the external building of his plays, he is unconventional. *Canción de Cuna* has two acts; *Don Juan de España* has seven. *Canción de Cuna* is a short comedy, or rather *comedia*, for with all its brightness and humour it ends fittingly with the tragic figure of Sor Juana de la Cruz alone, "weeping bitterly." The characterization of this little masterpiece is skilful throughout; its poetry is never introduced at the expense of reality, which nevertheless is constantly bathed in charm and emotion. There is a gap of eighteen years between the first and second acts, while unity of place is strictly maintained. That of time is not really broken, for the character of the nuns develops quietly in their convent, the doctor is an old man in both acts, while Teresa figures in the first act only as a baby in a basket.

In *El Reino de Dios* the unity of the play is Sister Gracia. She is the centre of the three acts, which are set in three different places and at intervals of ten and forty years. And it is when one might expect to find her old and broken in the third act that she appears in all her strength, an unconquerable force before which the clamour of revolutionaries and the glamour of the young bullfighter's fame break as waves on a wall of granite. The triumph of character over circumstance is equally clear in *Los Pastores*, where the victory is with the aged priest going out abandoned and alone and not with the crowd feasting at the *alcalde's* house. So in *Lirio entre Espinas* Sor Teresa dominates a situation

for which her training as a nun could scarcely have prepared her, and in *La Mujer del Héroe* Mariana's strength of will succeeds in a situation almost as difficult as that which faced Sor Teresa.

With the exception of the priest Don Antonio and of Don Juan when in the last act he has become, like the hero of Don Ricardo León's *El Amor de los Amores*, a monk at Seville, it would perhaps be difficult to point to a similar strength of character in any of the male figures of Señor Martínez Sierra's plays. Certainly he shares with Señor Pérez de Ayala, perhaps to a greater degree than any other contemporary Spanish writer, the gift of making his characters immediately and indelibly interesting; they impose themselves with a force that is not to be denied. It does not matter whether they are two old inmates of an asylum, Trajano and Gabriel (sketches, it might seem, for Pérez de Ayala's Belarmino and Apolonio) or Quica and Candela in *El Reino de Dios* or Don Juan's servant Panfilo in *Don Juan de España*, or the old servant Justa in *Primavera en Otoño*: they are presented so sharply and sympathetically that we are always glad to meet them and are left with a desire to hear more of them. As a correction of a tendency to sentimentalism, Señor Martínez Sierra can depend upon his humour and on the spirited animation of his plays. We have the *espèglerie* of Doña Barbarita, the octogenarian lady who knows so well when she should be awake and when she should be asleep in her drawing-room chair (*Sueño de una noche de Agosto*); the innocent malice of the old doctor in *Canción de Cuna*, the utter absurdity of the almost heroic lover in *El Enamorado*, which may leave us, like the Queen, wavering between tears and laughter. As a relief, too, although sometimes adding to instead of correcting the sen-

THE DRAMA

timental, are introduced incongruous figures, the witless old woman and the lunatic Negro in *El Reino de Dios*, or the uncouth half-idiot Ricardito in *Lirio entre Espinas*.

The two most universal figures in Spanish literature, Don Quixote and Don Juan, have both been largely pondered over by Spain's modernist writers. Señor Martínez Sierra's play *Don Juan de España* abounds in reminiscences of former writers but works out its own originality. The seven acts are bound loosely together by the presence of Don Juan himself and his comical, faithful servant Panfilo. The scenes are a garden in Italy, a rich citizen's house in a Flemish town, a popular festival in Paris, an Aragonese inn with its *ilustre fregona*, a cemetery in Andalucía, a Seville tavern and the Patio de los Naranjos of Seville's cathedral. The atmosphere is at once romantic and realistic, poetry and hard prose, a mixture, it might seem, of Rostand and Cervantes. The final scene is original. A disdainful gentleman, vexed that the Seville beggars should press between the wind and his nobility, bids his *escudero* throw them a coin. The squire pulls out a copper coin and, with the air of one tossing away a fortune, cries: "Remediaos, canalla!" The beggars fight for the copper; Don Juan, now Hermano Juan, intervenes in the broil and is stabbed and dies, but dies in the arms of the innocent Clara, being accompanied to the end by a woman's love.

Señor Martínez Sierra presents the rare combination of great delicacy with great vigour and untiring industry. Beginning as a poet, he soon turned to prose and, in the delightful stories of *Sol de la Tarde*, displayed his peculiar qualities: the careful choice of words, skilled blending of poetry and reality, a curbed imagination, richness of content, and sobriety in its presentation. He came half-way to the thea-

tre in *Teatro de Ensueño* and produced his first plays a few years later. The success of *Juventud divino tesoro* and *La Sombra del Padre* paled before that of *Canción de Cuna*, a simple story somewhat similar to that of *Golondrina de Sol* in *Sol de la Tarde*: a foundling is adopted by a community of Dominican nuns and their old doctor; she grows up in the convent and only leaves it to be married at the age of eighteen. Both in sureness of taste and in the construction of the play, a great skill in omission is felt throughout. The same restraint and charm are shown in the miracle play *Navidad* and in *Dos Pastores*, in which a sensible rough old village priest, versed in the villagers' ways and attending wisely and patiently to all their troubles, is dispossessed in favour of a newfangled specious young priest eminently suited to cities and destined to find in the village something more than roses sometimes, as his predecessor warns him. The old priest's sister, the doctor Don Francisco, Juanillo, who provides the comic relief, the flighty Lucia and other figures are admirably drawn.

In *La Mujer del Héroe* it is the character of the celebrated airman's wife, Mariana, that dominates the play, as that of another Mariana does in the slighter sketch *El Pobrecito Juan*, and that of Rosario in *Sueño de una Noche de Agosto* (*The Romantic Young Lady*). The collaboration of Don Gregorio Martínez Sierra and of his wife Doña María Lejárraga is as closely interwoven as that of the brothers Alvarez Quintero in their *sainetes*. The sympathetic interest in the development of the female characters need by no means be the mark of a woman's hand, and a certain feminine strain might be characteristic of a modernist writer; but the feminist outlook in the *Sueño de una noche de Agosto*, *La Mujer del Héroe*, *Pobrecito Juan* and other plays no doubt

THE DRAMA

represents the well-known feminist views of Doña María Lejárraga, to whom likewise may be ascribed something of the delicacy of the craftsmanship.

In *El Reino de Dios* Gracia, the grand-daughter of a marquis, feels that as an ignorant girl she has nothing to give but her happiness, and she gives that, first in an asylum for old men, then in a maternity home, and finally in an orphanage; that is, she exchanges worldly for spiritual happiness. Even more than Señor Benavente, the Martínez Sierras are the dramatists of Madrid. Mariana, in *La Mujer de un Héroe*, is the glorification of the Madrid *manola*, with her "honesty and good sense, sturdy charm, self-forgetfulness, generous heart and just mind" (English trans. Granville-Barker). *Madama Pepita* is the story of a Madrid dress-maker and her daughter, the most unusual characters in a somewhat conventional play being the daughter Catalina and the artist Don Guillermo. The musical comedy *La Tirana* and other plays also sketch Madrid types.

As manager of the Teatro Eslava and of the publishing firm El Renacimiento, which has rendered excellent service to Spanish letters, Señor Martínez Sierra might have been expected to find his time fully occupied; yet the plays continue to pour from his pen and their vein of lyricism has not been dulled by his multifarious occupations. He has also found time to translate or adapt a large number of works, including plays by Shakespeare, Barrie, Maeterlinck (whose influence was at one time keenly felt in Spain and by none more keenly than by Martínez Sierra), Santiago Rusiñol, Brieux, Dumas, Goldoni, Björnson, Ibsen. All this living work of poems essays, stories, sketches, plays and translations is proof of a vigorous talent from which even greater things may be expected, now that it has attained maturity.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

A native good taste and humour have corrected an early leaning towards affectation and preciosity, while the zest and poetical interpretation of reality remain ever fresh and young, even though, as the Queen laments in *El Enamorado*, "we have been born too late into a world that has grown old." In this essentially Spanish drama the ideal and the spiritual keep gleaming and glowing through reality, like Sor Teresa among the thorns.

§ 6. LINARES RIVAS

The success attained by the Galician dramatist Don MANUEL LINARES RIVAS in *Aire de fuera* and especially in *El Abolengo* has been maintained in numerous other plays, including *María Victoria*, *Nido de Aguilas*, *El Caballero Lobo*, *La Raza*, *La Garra*, *En cuerpo y alma*. It may be fair criticism to say that these plays have a certain sameness (*ab uno disce omnes*) and that they leave no abiding impression on the mind; but at the time of reading, and no doubt in seeing them acted, they are so animated, rapid and sparkling (is not one of the longer plays entitled *La espuma de Champagne?*), their dialogue so natural and witty without ceasing to be natural, their characters so true to life, that one is carried on delightfully from the first scene to the last.

Señor Linares Rivas often has a serious purpose behind his presentation of frivolous life in the society of the aristocracy and middle classes, but he sketches his problems lightly and avoids the pitfall of long speeches; in *El Abolengo*, for instance, nobody has more than a hundred words to speak at one time. This brief play is admirably constructed and shows the hand of the consummate playwright. Its central idea is the conflict between love and family pride. Pilar,

THE DRAMA

being the niece of a *marquesa*, wishes to see her crest on her husband's carriage and her livery on her husband's servants; to which he, being a plain sensible man, very properly and firmly objects, with the result that she leaves her husband's house and takes refuge in that of her parents, Don Jorge, sensible and weak, and his snobbish, foolish, selfish wife Doña Gertrudis. Unhappily or happily she arrives, escorted by her husband, just as her mother and sister are off to the theatre in the *marquesa's* carriage, and they leave her to her sober reflections and to the advice of her father and sister-in-law, the level-headed Antonia.

The same conflict between the pride of high birth and the imperiousness of love is presented in another form in *Nido de Aguilas*, in which Catalina, being of noble birth, is guarded by her mother with the watchful exclusiveness of a dragon, so that her penniless cousin Isabel, and even her servants, are made happy while she remains true to her mother, false to her love, and ends the play with the words: "And I alone! Is life on so high a plane worth such isolation?" The critics fell foul of Señor Linares Rivas for his somewhat artificial advocacy of divorce in *La Garra*. The sanity of his outlook generally is shown in *En cuerpo y alma*, in which the path of duty is humorously but clearly marked by the keen insight of Juan de Dios Cabalín (*sesenta años magníficos*); and in *La Jaula de la Leona*, which presents Doña Alejandrina defending her home against Marysol and routing her husband Don Javier, Duque de Ferreira y de los Peranzules, all along the line. Señor Linares Rivas' plays are excellent *cuadros de costumbres*, and if their scope is limited to high life and they thus lack the universality of the earlier *costumbristas*, he cultivates his garden with intimate knowledge and unfailing spirit, skill and discretion.

§ 7. THE BROTHERS ÁLVAREZ QUINTERO

Literature has her full share, although some critics affect to doubt it, in the glory of the brothers SERAFÍN and JOAQUÍN ÁLVAREZ QUINTERO, who have now for over twenty years, since the success of *El Ojito Derecho* and *La Buena Sombra*, delighted Madrid audiences and an ever-widening circle of readers by their *sainetes*, *entremeses*, *zarzuelas*, and *comedias*. In their light and charming sketches of their native Andalucía, humour and emotion join hands as intimately as the inextricably dovetailed collaboration of the authors. Their vein of various charm and clear spontaneity appears to be inexhaustible, and when barely over fifty they are the joint authors of some 150 pieces, the titles of many of which have become household words in Spain. Extreme naturalness has always marked their portrayal of Andalusian types, and if the authors who in *La Calumniada* protest against foreigners' ignorance of Spain have added fuel to the narrow legend of the gay, witty, idle *andaluz*, within the limits they have set themselves they are very faithful to life.

What they profess to do for a phase of Seville life in *El Patio*, giving us "a handful of its wit, a piece of its streets, a corner of its houses, a flower of its flowers," they have constantly done for the rest of Andalucía. When they have attempted more ambitious flights or deserted Andalucía for Castile, their success has often, although not always, been equally marked. They can construct the three-act *comedia* as skilfully, lightly and substantially as the short *sainete*. Their immediate and enduring success is a significant proof that the "*paladares estragados*" are capable of appreciating

THE DRAMA

healthy fare if it is set before them, for with all its wit and gaiety the art of the Álvarez Quinteros is eminently sane and clean. The critics have denied them deep psychological insight, but they have the faculty for drawing characters which remain fixed in the memory and entertain or charm or succeed in doing both at the same time.

Natural in their presentment of Andalusian types, when exaggeration might be fatal, in their portrayal of Madrid characters they follow Galdós rather than Benavente in a tendency to caricature or at least to emphasize small external tricks and foibles. We may compare Don Eligio (*El Genio Alegre*) in Andalucía, *laista*, sworn foe to laughter, “la negación de la alegría,” who succeeds in being natural in his absurdity, with the *casamentero* Don Segismundo and his eight *lenguas vivas* at Madrid (*Las de Caín*). So we have Doña Jenara with her mania for setting pictures straight on the walls (*Las de Caín*); Doña Mínima, who never says anything but is always saying it, in *Febrerillo el loco*, in which Tirso, in the teeth of his curmudgeonly brother Don Roque, insists on substituting for money and conventional propriety generosity, affection and happiness; talkative Carita and positive old Jeremías and his parrot in *Los Galcotes*; Doña Lourdes, the martyr companion, in *La Prisa*; the cross-grained Don Aquiles in *Mi Hermano y Yo*; the determined Quica and socially omniscient Doña Munda in *El Mundo es un pañuelo*; the erudite Hormiguero in *Don Juan buena persona*. How admirable is the more natural figure of Don Antolín in *La Prisa*; how charming many of the heroines, Carita, Amalia, Consolación, Malvaloca!

To describe and analyse the whole work of the Álvarez Quinteros would require a volume. Let us take a few of the

plays almost at random. All their plays are not of equal merit, but all may be read with pleasure and profit, for none is without interesting and attractive touches, and they are so deftly composed that they may almost be said to read themselves. The slightest *entremés*, as the twelve pages of *El Cuartito de Hora* (1922), may contain a picture of Seville life, even if it is not comparable to the delightful earlier *entremés Mañana de Sol*; or, as in *El Corazón en la mano* (1919), present a charming character such as that of Inesita Pereira. Often a serious purpose lurks in the background. *La Prisa* is a satire (but the satire of the Álvarez Quinteros here as always is full of good humour and gaiety) on the pleasureless speed of modern fashionable life (Escorial and Madrid), with the contrast of life in the country in the third act, and the ineffectual speed of politics, with "la fiebre del gobierno nuevo" which was the very breath of Madrid's life but was ruining Spain. This play well represents its authors' method of a series of comic touches cleverly repeated until the humour flows over.

La Musa Loca gives a vivid picture of a government office at Madrid and satirizes the mania for writing plays. Don Mauricio thinks that he is "the only Spaniard who is not a dramatic author." *El Mundo es un pañuelo* contains some real humour as well as much cheap laughter. The Madrid servant, Berenguela is successfully hit off. The authors themselves feel that the play is a "series of coincidences." The subject of *Las de Caín* is that Don Segismundo, with eight unmarried daughters, promises the hand of one of them to Alfredo on condition that they shall wait until all the rest are married. This pact leads to some farcical scenes, and they end by palming off the most unmarriageable of the

sisters on her solemn uncle Tío Cayetano. Of the characters in this play it might be said, as of Cardona in *Don Juan buena persona*: "nació tipo cómico"; they have been made for the play rather than the play for them.

In *Los Galeotes* we are raised to a higher plane in the little Madrid second-hand bookshop of the good-hearted Don Miguel. The comical and sentimental elements are here pleasantly combined. The characters are all living and memorable, and it is in the characters rather than in the plot that the great merit of the play consists. In the Andalusian *comedia El Genio Alegre*, Doña Sacramento, Marquesa de los Arrayanes, recaptures her son, the merry Julio, the present marquis, when her sprightly niece Consolación fills her house with flowers and laughter, to the dismay of the steward of the estate, Don Eligio. The story is filled in with Andalusian figures of humble life. In *Malvaloca* (the resemblance to Martínez Sierra's *El Reino de Dios* at the beginning of the play is of a merely superficial character) a vivid charm surrounds the development of the resolve of Leandro, owner of a foundry in Andalucía, to redeem the fair, high-minded and affectionate Malvaloca. The Sevillian comedy *La Calumniada* has a patriotic purpose, and it contrasts the enthusiastic delight in and devotion to Spain of Federico Anderson with the mania of Spaniards for self-depreciation (superficial perhaps, and derived ultimately from the false criticism of Spain by foreigners during three centuries) represented here by Florencio. "And when I could scarcely say in Spanish "Papa and Mamma," says Don Augusto, "I was taught both English and French. Spanish was evidently of minor importance. At meals in my home English was the language usually spoken and Spain was belittled and criti-

cized, more especially when there were foreign visitors." One may compare this with the *francesismo* satirized by Eça de Queiroz in Portugal.

In *Don Juan buena persona* the authors, as they admit, propose a miracle: "el milagro de ser Don Juan y buena persona." Don Juan is a solicitor; he is "kindly towards all"; he is "esclavo de sus esclavas"; "I have nothing," he says, "in common with Don Juan." Finally he falls a victim to the charms of Amalia. Affection, but perhaps not greater respect, is inspired by this new presentation of the legendary figure. The interest is scarcely so well sustained in *Mi Hermano y Yo*, the story of an attempt to bring a husband and wife to reconciliation (*rosas de otoño*) in order to facilitate the marriage of their daughter. Here for once the thesis seems to have run away with the plot and the characters, of which we chiefly remember the iracund Don Aquiles Iruela. In these and scores of other plays, the authors hold us by their high spirits, good feeling and wisdom of the heart. Very Spanish in their realism, they owe much to their close study of the Spanish people, copying successfully its communion of head and heart, the combination of wit and emotion, one might almost say a spirited sentimentalism. In the *sainete*, "so indigenous, so Spanish; cultured wit; a mocking satire," as Don Segismundo describes it, they have achieved some of their greatest triumphs, for the *sainetes* differ from the *comedias* less in quality than in length.

§ 8. THE POETICAL DRAMA

The chief representative of the poetical play is Don Eduardo Marquina, who may be best studied as a poet.

THE DRAMA

Some of his historical plays have been received with great favour of recent years, but his genius is perhaps rather epical and lyrical than dramatic. As a poet too must be judged Don Francisco de Villaespesa. It was his object in *El Alcazar de las Perlas* "to write as an Arab of Granada would have written," "to magnify lyrically the spirit of Granada"; but a sense of atmosphere and poetical charm are not sufficient to constitute a drama, and we are left with a vague memory of exquisitely furnished Moorish palaces rather than of any definite characters or a dramatic story.

The true lyrical drama has been most successfully achieved by the novelist Señor Valle-Inclán. His *comedias bárbaras* contain real dramatic elements but are supported chiefly by their lyrical vein. The harsh realism of his prose play *Cara de Plata*, its fierce savage figures and brutal acts are combined with an atmosphere of fantasy and romance; the discordant voices float upon a mist of dream. The barbarous magnificence of Valle-Inclán's Galician *hidalgos* fills these scenes with an air of splendid unreality. Realism and unreality join hands also in *Voces de Gesta*, rhymed in the arbitrary and archaic versification from which Señor Valle-Inclán extracts effects so various and imposing. The lyric strain alternates with a sheer revelling in horrible details and incidents. It is the same Valle-Inclán who in the novels loves to present barbaric themes in a delicately chiselled style. The realistic tragic figure of the shepherdess Ginebra is set in a background of Castilian uplands, with beggars and peasants and shepherds: "mozos de Medina, galanes de Olmedo." With the head of her enemy and betrayer (the father and murderer of her little son) in her wallet, she wanders for ten years through cornlands and over mountains in search of her true king:

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Por muerta me tengo y bien enterrada,
Quien va por el mundo es mi alma empenada.

There is an indigenous flavour throughout which gives an air of possibility to these strange events. Señor Valle-Inclán in his plays, as in *Romance de Lobos*, derives his charm from his presentment of the little things of common experience rather than from the fruits of his imagination. There is a suggestion of deliberate insincerity about *Cuento de Abril* and *La Marquesa Rosalinda*, intended no doubt to add to the lightness of touch of the magician piping sad or merry airs at will:

Salte la gracia del trocaico
verso, ligero como un niño.

The atmosphere is here of France and the Eighteenth Century:

Bajo el vuelo de abejas de oro
las gentiles rosas de Francia;
Las rosas nos vengan de Galia.

Realism is still mingled with romance, but the peasant scenes now yield to those of clipped laurel and myrtle:

y un aire galán se levanta
meciendo las rosas del rosa!:

Cuento de Abril revives memories of Macías or Rodríguez de la Cámara and contains real poetry beneath the *manera extravagante* of its versification. The French or Italian influence is even more evident in *La Marquesa Rosalinda*, with its marquis and *abate* and *madamas* (*rien las madamas*). The sentiment is corrected by a burlesque humour:

THE DRAMA

Arlequin saluda burlando,
con una pirueta grotesca;
voy a aquel banco
para poderme desmayar;

Arlequin ends his lyrical ode to the moon with the lines:

Cabalística luna de marfil,
tu escribes en lo azul, moviendo las estrellas,
Nihil.

But if Arlequin is not to be taken seriously, his passion for Rosalinda is reduced to a mere fantasy of *locas quimeras*. "Tejamos las bellas mentiras"; the play is permeated not by cold reason, but by a delicate vein of lyrical poetry:

canto de alondras mañanero
en el azul.

Here, however, as in all Señor Valle-Inclán's work, realism is far from being neglected, and the verse is scented with apples as well as with roses: "olor de rosa y de manzana." The stage directions are all given in verse, as though to indicate that the play is addressed rather to the lover of poetry than to the actor.

Another Galician poet who is also a novelist (*La Loba*, 1918), Don ANTONIO REY SOTO, has written poetical plays such as *Amor que vence al amor* (1917) and the tragedy *Cuento del Lar* (1918).

§ 9. NEW TENDENCIES

In an age of many experiments, a return to genuine drama must have all the air of a new experience. A real dramatic force, a penetrating and austere sobriety mark the work of a

dramatist half Catalan, half Andalusian, Don JACINTO GRAU DELGADO, born in 1877, whose art has developed powerfully since the production of his first play, *Las Bodas de Camacho*. His study of *Don Juan de Carillana* is shot through with idealism and reveals psychological insight. The failure of Señor Grau's plays upon the stage raises the question whether they are really not for the stage but for the reader or whether the playgoer's taste has become so corrupted that he now will prefer almost anything to what is really dramatic.

Don RAMON GOY DE SILVA'S symbolical prose drama *La Reina Silencio* is remarkable for the purity of its prose style, a vigour and purity due to the intensity of the drama itself. Queen Silence is Death, who is "the sublime lover who welcomes us when we are deserted by all." She receives in her place all the pilgrims of Earth, enticed thither by her daughters, the seven princesses, "sirens of the seven capital sins." Robed in rainbow hues, gathering poppies, clover and violets, they give colour and relief to the black and white domains of the silent queen. There is style and emotion and greater variety in *La Corte del Cuervo Blanco*, a *fábula escénica* in prose, in which the *dramatis personæ* are a fly, a bee, a butterfly, a bat, a peacock, and generally all the birds of the air. The symbolism which pervades the play is vaguer than that of *La Reina Silencio*. The White Crow represents the past, the present and the future. The rivalry between the nightingale and the gadfly provides the dramatic element.

These two plays, valuable in themselves, are unlikely to have a large number of imitators. It was but natural that so many and so various writers should have wrapped themselves in the tatters of drama's robe, which the genius of

THE DRAMA

Echegaray had violently rent asunder, while popular favour, weaned from the drama first by the *género chico*, then by the cinematograph, left the playwrights to their own devices and to the criticism of their readers. It will be seen that we have travelled far from the great national drama which filled Spain and the world with its glory in the Seventeenth Century. It would not, however, be surprising if a reaction were to bring the plays of Calderon and Tirso de Molina and Lope de Vega again upon the stage. At all events, one may safely prophesy that the drama in Spain will not die down to a mere thing of the study, a *teatro de lectura*.

III. LYRIC POETRY

III. LYRIC POETRY

§ 1. THE FORERUNNERS OF MODERNISM

THE DEVELOPMENT of lyrical poetry in Spain during the last half-century is of exceptional interest. In the first half of this period the poems of Becquer, Querol and Rosalía de Castro seem to be a premonition of the modernist innovators. Perhaps it would be truer to say that the genuine poet, who learns in suffering what he gives us in song, has always tended to dispense with rhetoric, find individual expression, and write out of the fullness of his heart, moulding his verse to the sincerity of his thought or passion, not fitting his words into rigid forms. The brief life of GUSTAVO ADOLFO BECQUER ended before the period with which we are here concerned had begun, but his *Rimas*, published in 1871, the year after his death, have exercised a great and increasing influence on the poets of two generations. The spiritual intensity of Becquer, possibly a more intense although less accomplished poet than Heine, is poured forth in these poems like molten glass,

domando el rebelde mezquino idioma.

Caring little for rhyme and everything for the flexible rhythm of the verse, he expressed his passion in a minor key, which contrasted with the more sonorous poetry then in vogue. Gradually his small body of verse came to form a school (a fifth edition of his Works appeared in the celebrated year

1898), and a hundred poets without his genius or intensity murmured their *suspirillos germánicos* in print.

Seven years after the publication of Becquer's *Rimas* appeared the *Rimas* of the Valencian poet VICENTE WENCESLAO QUEROL. His three quiet *Cartas a María* may be preferred even to the fine patriotic odes in which one seems to see a mixture of Quintana and Leopardi and which, as most of his verse, succeed in combining pliancy with conciseness. His object was

traducir fielmente con la lira
La efusión de mi alma;

to present *algo viviente de nuestra alma propia*. But he wished also to write *con frase propia*, and in the passage, for instance, of the first *Carta a María* beginning:

Del áspero romero azules flores,

we find an Attic flavour, with a Horatian exactness of epithet. His softly, gently moulded verse made little impression at the time: "Querol's book," says Teodoro Llorente, "was little spoken of; its publication was scarcely noticed." The same fate befell the volume of Spanish poems *En las orillas del Sar* published by the Galician poetess ROSALÍA DE CASTRO in 1884, in which, a subjective poet, but occupied more frequently than Becquer and Querol with external things, she expressed her original genius with naturalness and at the same time with great variety of metre in the perfect freedom of genuine inspiration. Her soul finds expression here as that of the Galician peasantry found expression in her *Cantares Gallegos*. Her suffering spirit recognizes a fellowship in the wind and the rain, in the

LYRIC POETRY

rumores del onda que pasa y que muere.

She cries hauntingly:

Pero es verdad, Dios mío, que ellos mueren
y quedamos nosotros?

or

Ay! ¿En dónde su rastro dejaron,
En dónde, alma mía?

A quarter of a century after her death, full justice was done to her poetry by the modernists, one of whom, Don Enrique Díez Canedo, in 1908 wrote of the new harmony and the novelty of the metres in her verse: "The alexandrine triumphs in Rosalía de Castro, whose assonant verses express its full, intimate humanity." She was, indeed, with Becquer the chief harbinger of the modernist school. In this connexion one must remember the pliant Castilian verse of the Valencian poet TEODORO LLORENTE and later the Castilian lyrics of the Mallorcan poets Don JUAN ALCOVER and Don MIGUEL COSTA Y LLOBERA. It might seem that the poets of the fringes of Spain, Galicia, Valencia, Andalucía, were combining in an attack on the poetry of Castile; but the vital thrust was to come from yet farther afield.

§ 2. CAMPOAMOR AND NÚÑEZ DE ARCE

While regional poetry was winning triumphs in Galicia, Valencia and Catalonia, soon to find further echoes in the remarkable *Aires Murcianos* of Vicente Medina, and the *Extremeñas* of Gabriel y Galán, Campoamor and Núñez de Arce continued to reign at Madrid, and both lived on into the

Twentieth Century. The younger generation might be disposed to deny that RAMÓN DE CAMPOAMOR was a poet; but he could tell a story in verse with such admirable point and concision and so dramatic an effect that he will not easily fall into oblivion, and some of his verses have already entered into the common stock of a Spaniard's literary inheritance and have become almost anonymous. The true Campoamor is the poet of quatrains such as that beginning *En este mundo traidor* or of brief dramatic lyrics such as *Quien supiere escribir*, one of the gems of his early volume of *Doloras*. Even the poems of the collection entitled *Pequeños Poemas* are too long to sustain the reader's interest. His was not a lyric inspiration but a very conscious deliberate art; he wished his poetry to be national and natural, and if he did not always succeed in avoiding the commonplace, he often gave adequate expression to a thought by a characteristic turn of concentrated versification. His kindly disillusion found vent in his *Humoradas*, published in old age, nearly half a century after the *Doloras*. The harmless affectation of those titles does not prevent Campoamor from ranking high among the weavers of apophthegms through which, in prose and verse, so much of Spanish philosophy has delivered its message.

A far more poetical genius was that of GASPAR NÚÑEZ DE ARCE, who, living in an age of transition and disquiet, in literature as well as in politics, stood, as it were, midway between what he called the *oda ampulosa* and the *suspirillos líricos*. He complained of

La Musa del análisis que, armada
del árido escalpelo a cada paso
nos precipita en el obscuro abismo.

LYRIC POETRY

He was influenced by all the changing forces of his day and wrote an ode to Darwin as well as an ode to Castelar. It is not surprising that this scholar, who would willingly have taken life for a hermitage but refused to stand aside and evade life, should have been constantly stretching out his hands *ripæ ulterioris amore* in hope, doubt or despair, to the past or the future:

Y está la playa mística tan lejos!
a los tristes reflejos
del sol poniente se colora y brilla.
El huracán arreeia, el bajel arde,
y es tarde, es, ay, muy tarde
para aleanzar la sosegada orilla.

Thus he remained suspended between hell and heaven:

mis horas paso
ineierto entre los cielos y el abismo,

and his *Gritos de Combate* were the expression of his own perplexities.

There is a combined vigour and delicacy of thought and many-sided interest in his verse of many various metres. He is a master of the *terceto* and of blank verse and of the stanza of seven and eleven syllables. It is verse moulded rather than hammered and is filled with a quiet eloquence, a restrained fire. Charmingly the embers of the past revive and glow in the finished stanzas of his *Idilio*. He felt the influence of foreign poets, French, Italian and Portuguese. He also read English poetry, underwent the fascination of Shelley and Byron, could understand Tennyson and admire, a little fearfully, the genius of Swinburne, but was completely

floored by Browning: "I feel no admiration for him whatsoever," he declared in 1887. The failure to understand Browning was less strange than one might think, for the legend of Browning's obscurity cast its shadow before, and, moreover, Núñez de Arce's genius was not dramatic. He was a lyrical poet of a rhetorical vein (akin to the Portuguese poet and historian Herculano, whose death he lamented in verse) and might have developed into an oratorical Lucan had he not possessed a supreme artistic sense of style.

Other poets were not entirely overshadowed by the great figures of Núñez de Arce and Campoamor. EMILIO FERRARI, a disciple of the former, showed a very accomplished command of metre and a truly poetic talent in various compositions, of which the best-known is *Pedro Abelardo*. Another poet in whose hands the metre was as clay in the hands of the potter was MANUEL REINA (1856-1905). A letter from Núñez de Arce accompanied his *La Vida Inquieta* in 1894. The bitter JOAQUÍN MARÍA BARTRINA rhymed his pessimism in *Algo* (1876). Grief for the loss of his wife found vent in the *Dolores* of the critic FEDERICO BALART with a tenderness and simplicity less apparent in his later volume entitled *Horizontes*. A poet more representative of his time, but whose talent is represented only to a small degree in his published verse, was MANUEL DEL PALACIO, epigrammatic in *Chispas*, an accomplished sonneteer in *Melodías Intimas*. His long life (1852-1907) was devoted largely to journalistic tasks and it would seem that his genuine poetical vein never had time to find serious expression. Less lyrical and more satirical is the vein of Don SINESIO DELGADO, author of many *sainetes*, and the light humorous verse of Don LUIS DE TAPIA.

LYRIC POETRY

§ 3. THE MODERNIST INVASION

Southey saw and said that Spain's decadence was of the State, not of the people; but when her last colonies fell from her in 1898, certain Spanish intellectuals turned not to the Spanish people but to foreign influences in search of regeneration. Some of the writers of this "Generation of 1898" ultimately sought their inspiration in more national sources, in the ancient towns and villages of Castile and among the Spanish people: to this fact Azorín, Señor Baroja and Señor Unamuno owe much of their force and their attraction. But for the moment national sources for literature were in abeyance, and when a few years before the end of the century the Nicaraguan poet RUBÉN DARÍO came to Spain, modernism was sure of a ready welcome. The times were favourable, and the poetry of Darío, which was the work of genius and therefore a new thing, seemed to have intoxicated the younger poets, who all began to practise their scales in public.

Many critics would date the beginning of Spanish modernist poetry from the appearance of Darío's *Azul* in 1888; but Spanish modernism is a complicated phenomenon (it would not be modernism otherwise) and cannot be assigned to one fixed date. In its half-tints and exquisite music it comes, partly, through South America, from the French Symbolists and Decadents; in reviving a variety of metres and modulating the rhythm until it becomes a living thought, personal, subjective, softly pliant and insinuating as the opening bars of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, it had had, as we have seen, forerunners in Spain: Becquer, Querol, Rosalía de Castro. An Andalusian, a Valencian, a Galician: evidently modernism is in some way foreign to the

Castilian genius; it certainly is so in the lack of taste and restraint which are unhappily of every age but strongly characterized one side of Darío's genius. As to the rhythm, one finds Castilian versification supple and various enough in the hands of a master such as Lope de Vega or Espronceda. However far back one goes, one will find the modernist, subjective, decadent artist: El Greco the Cretan, rightly dear to the Generation of 1898, was a modernist (has not his art been described as *eine denkende Materie, une pensée nue*, more akin to music than to sculpture?); the Roman poet Catullus, in the exquisite pliancy of his metres, in his subjectivity and extravagance, was essentially a modernist.

Genius bloweth where it listeth, and the unfortunate fact that Rubén Darío came to be regarded as the head of a school rather than an experimentalist of genius must not blind us to his greatness. Few poets of original genius, few creators, have produced fewer permanent, perfect poems, but all through his poetry runs the clear vein of his genius, appearing here and there like a blue vein of opal in much chalk. There was, moreover, the alloy which stiffened his poetry and prevented it from becoming a mere perishable Paris fashion: "en el fondo de mi espíritu," he said, "existe el inarrancable filón de la raza." This it was largely which gave to his *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza* a broader, saner outlook. With an unquenchable, half-morbid curiosity he gathered grapes from every vine, he sampled every kind of metre and tendency and sensation; sometimes the resulting wine was of a marvellously delicious flavour; sometimes the grapes remained half crushed and the brew was crude, prosaic and absurd. No wonder that the teeth of the fathers in Spain were set on edge. No one was less fitted to become the founder of a school. He was what a French Symbolist

LYRIC POETRY

of genius might have become had he possessed so powerful and various and musical an instrument as the Spanish language; but one cannot help wondering what Darío himself, with his fertile power of assimilation, might have become had he been able to revel in Greek literature and Nature—yes, and in the older Castilian literature—as insatiably as in French symbolism and in cities:

Amo más que la Grecia de los griegos
la Grecia de la Francia.

Even as it was, his classical education, so far as it went, saved him from many pitfalls. We accept him as one of the greatest poets of the Nineteenth Century, a few of his poems will be immortal, and his influence on Castilian versification will probably be permanent; but that need not prevent us from rejecting his poetry as a whole and regarding it mainly as a preparation, an experiment. His taste improved, partly under Spanish influence, and it is in the earlier works that we find such words as *gin* and *cinc*, such expressions as *sonoro olifante* (*Prosas Profanas*). To the later *Canto Errante* belong the poems *Aquí junto al mar latino* and *Eco divina y desnuda*, and to *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza* the *Canción de Otoño en Primavera*, *La Dulzura del Angelus* and *Un Soneto a Cervantes*. At its best his poetry is a subtle intoxicating music; it resembles a southern sea rippling and splashing and sinking into the sand in molten beryl and sapphire:

es un ritmo de onda de mar
o un caer de copo de nieve.

Its rhythm and accents are delicate as the petals of a flower, an exotic flower with poison as well as loveliness in it, and

the language is rejuvenated in silken lengths of exquisite sensibility:

Juventud, divino tesoro,
Ya te vas para no volver:
Cuando quiero llorar no lloro,
Y a veces lloro sin querer.

Although Rubén Darío stands out by reason of his genius, his influence, the haunting beauty of some of his verse, he does not stand alone. It is not easy or possible to distinguish the various intertwining threads of influence, to say precisely who reacted upon whom, or who was the first, who last, in the modernist school. The Mexican poet MANUEL GUTIERREZ NÁJERA (1859-95) and the Colombian poet Silva were both a few years senior to Darío and died twenty years before his death in 1916. It is clear that certain forces, the poetry of French Parnassian, Symbolist and Decadent, of Baudelaire and Verlaine, but also the influence of earlier Spanish poets, were acting independently on the young poets of widely separated regions of South America. Gutierrez Nájera had read both the early Spanish classics and recent Spanish poetry. He was influenced by Becquer almost as soon as his *Rimas* appeared in 1871, and we seem to hear an echo of Rosalía de Castro in his *Después*:

El templo colosal, de nave inmensa
está húmeda y sombrío:
sin flores el altar, negro, muy negro,
apagados los cirios.

Born in old-world Bogotá, JOSÉ ASUNCIÓN SILVA (1865-96) always felt deeply the charm of ancient things:

LYRIC POETRY

las sugerencias místicas y raras
y los perfumes de las cosas viejas;
las cosas viejas, tristes, desteñidas,
sin voz y sin color;
las sombras de las viejas catedrales;

But he was also in love with “sútiles armonías, fragancia indecisa, frágiles cosas, el color del bosque mustio, los dormidos murmullos del follaje”; and it is the charm of his verse that he combines the affection for ancient things with the innovations of the Symbolists and calls the most various rhythms into his service:

Llamé a todos los ritmos con un conjuro mágico.

Clearly the influence was not only, perhaps mainly, that of the French Symbolists; and it was perhaps Querol's lines

el trémulo
triste son de las lúgubres campanas
a orar llamó a los vivos por los muertos

that suggested one of his best-known and most haunting poems, *El Día de Defuntos*, with its

campanas plañideras
que les hablan a los vivos
de los muertos.

A slightly younger Colombian poet, GUILLERMO VAL-
ENCIA, is cosmopolitan in his outlook; the poets he
translates are of the Symbolist school: Verlaine, Mallarmé,
Heine, D'Annunzio, Eugenio de Castro; but his own poetry,
muted rather than audibly musical, attains a Parnassian per-
fection, and in one of his best poems, *Leyendo a Silva*, he

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

shows that his inspiration can be that of a poet of his native land. Another Mexican poet, AMADO NERVO, who was born and died three years before the birth and death of Rubén Darío, was undoubtedly influenced by Darío as he was by contemporary Spanish poets, but in his earliest work, *Místicas*, as in the later *Perlas Negras* and in *Serenidad*, one of his last works, he shows that he can preserve his own individuality. Much of his verse belongs to the Parnassian rather than to the Symbolist school.

Quando en la sobria plata del cabello
su plata celestial posa la luna . . .

Such verse is modelled, as that of the Parnassian, not carved like that of the classical poet nor sung like that of the Symbolist. Much of his talent was devoted to *rimas irónicas*, in which he could laugh at all the schools:

Yo no sé nada de literatura
ni de vocales átonas o tónicas,
ni de ritmos, medida o cesura
ni de escuelas (comadres antagónicas).

A South American modernist whose reputation has spread rapidly during the present century is the Peruvian poet JOSÉ SANTOS CHOCHANO. He can be a delicate Parnassian in his verse as well as the sonorous singer of Peruvian epics or the confused denunciatory poet of *Iras Santas* (1895), published when he was twenty. He has subtlety side by side with strength, and Rubén Darío could say of him with truth:

Y este fuerte poeta de alma tan vigorosa
sabe bien lo que cuentan los labios de la rosa.

LYRIC POETRY

The name of RAMÓN DOMINGO PERÉS carries us back to the Peninsula, for although he was born at La Habana, he writes in and of Spain. The delicate similes and careful style, Parnassian rather than Symbolist, give a charm to the small collection of poems entitled *Musgo*, and beneath the cold marble of the verse glows a comforting fire of sympathy:

Bajo el manto de nieve que la cubre
late el oculto fuego de la tierra:
si hundo en la nieve el pie, mágico soplo
le conforta y calienta.

The subtle delicacy without the extravagance of the new school is seen in the *Versos de las Horas*, *La Visita del Sol* and *La Sombra del Ensueño* of Don ENRIQUE DIEZ-CANEDO, whose exquisite verse can raise definite pictures in the mind, the old women returning to the village:

Y aquellas viejecillas que tornaban,
una tras otra, al pueblo, que pasaban,
negras, como las cuentas de un rosario;

or, in the sonnet *De vuelta del pinar*, the woodfire aglow in the winter twilight:

Los leños encendidos de reflejos
salpican muebles y tapices viejos;

or clothe itself in the fascination of popular poetry, as in *Rosa blanca* or *Cuento de Invierno* with its refrain:

Oye cómo crepita la leña en el hogar.

Among the poets of the new style are two writers better known now as novelists, a fact which has perhaps tended to obscure the extraordinary merit of their poetry. That of Don Ramón Pérez de Ayala in *La Paz del Sendero*, *El Sendero Innumerable* and *El Sendero Andante* has a substance and

vigour all its own and reveals a strongly original mind. Very different is the originality of Señor Valle-Inclán, who in *Aromas de Leyenda* reproduces with subtle sensibility "la música de algun cantar" and the charm of the Galician country-side. The Angelus rings, the "pobres de Dios" pass slowly along the flowered ways, the flocks are driven "along the red path between maizefields" and their bells tinkle drowsily in the scented afternoon:

tañen las esquilas lentas soñolientas.

His poetry is full of little definite sounds, as the *rumor de madreñas* in *El Pasajero* and in *Voces de Gesta*. He brings a sense of refined delicacy to bear on outward things. It is this combination of the subjective and the objective elements, spiritualizing the material and forcing the spiritual to materialize, that constitutes one of the features of the new poetry. Señor Pérez de Ayala's verse is of the intellect, constraining itself to music; that of Señor Valle-Inclán is all of the ear, music straining after thought. He can be audacious when it suits his rhyme:

Anochece. En la aldea
un gallo cacarea
mirando el amapol
del sol.

He is not afraid:

No tuve miedo, fui turbulento,
miré en las simas como en la luz,
dí mi palabra con mi alma al viento,
como una espada llevo mi cruz. (*El Pasajero*.)

LYRIC POETRY

But there is an underlying sadness and disillusion which brings his poetry into relation with the ancient tradition of the great ascetic poets of Castile; for instance:

Perecen las glorias,
se apagan los días,
quedan por memorias
las cenizas frías;

which seems an echo of Camões; or

La vida! Polvo en el viento
volador:
solo no muda el cimiento
del dolor,

where we see him midway between Gomez Manrique of the Fourteenth Century and João de Deus of the Nineteenth. He works by suggestion but is also a chiseller of clear vignettes:

Negros pastores, quietos en los tolvos,
adivinan la hora en las estrellas.

Frequently, however, he surrounds himself with mystery, and the voices of things fall distantly, "voz de las cosas, lejana voz." The poems contained in *El Pasajero* testify to his command of a variety of metres.

Another writer who has eclipsed his fame as a poet by his subsequent achievements in a different field of literature, is Don Gregorio Martínez Sierra. His early work in *Flores de Escarcha* and *La Casa de la Primavera* revealed a delicate poet, whose lyrical vein is now more evident in his prose. Without the depth and originality of his brother Antonio, Don MANUEL MACHADO has paid a larger

tribute to modernism. He can embody a scene or a moment of art and emotion in skilfully moulded verse, the pliancy of which is a delight to the ear, as in the sonnets *La buena canción* (*Alma*) or *Ocaso* (*Ars Moriendi*), and the brief section entitled *Siglo de Oro* in his slight volume *Alma. Museo. Los Cantares*, containing *Madrid Viejo*, *Felipe IV* and *Un Hidalgo* (one may compare some of the sonnets in Don ENRIQUE LÓPEZ ALARCÓN'S *Constelaciones* published in 1906). His sense of rhythm and his flexible style are shown in the successful boldness of the line, "con desmayo galán un guante de ante." In the last section (*Cantares*) of the volume, this poet who took for his models Becquer, Verlaine, Heine and Edgar Allan Poe proved his inherited susceptibility to the popular poetry of his native land. His verse, sometimes frivolous, occasionally commonplace, is often that of a true and most accomplished poet. The cream and flower of the modernist poetry in Spain is, however, to be found in the pages of another Andalusian, and it is by studying his work in some detail that we may best hope to discover the virtues and characteristics of the new school.

The chief Modernist poet of Spain, Don JUAN RAMÓN JIMÉNEZ, evidently has the gift of infuriating some critics and of fascinating others. But studying his work impartially nearly ten years after the death of Rubén Darío, when modernism is seen to have been a passing craze, the critic finds that there is something in Señor Jiménez' poetry that endures. He has his mannerisms, he will introduce strange words, such as *auriluzones* (*Poesías Agrestes*) or *nictálope* (*Eternidades*), and no one has more ruthlessly cut verses in half: Luis de Leon might boldly give the *mente* of an adverb to the following line; Señor Jiménez divides *jara-*

mago, ama-rillo (Pastorales), se ve or a la presión (Laberinto). He will give an epithet of colour to things of the ear and of sound to the things of sight: the wind is blue, the fragrance golden. His fondness for the adjective *malva* reminds one of the modernist painters whose insubstantial tree-trunks are a light purple and their leaves shrill yellow. We have *paisajes malvas, ángeles malvas, terciopelos malvas, paredes, penumbras, brazos, bocas, callejas, instantes, claridades*: dust, the sun, the moon, clouds, a hand, a rock, an afternoon, the grass, the sea are all *malva*. One remembers that his first volume of verse was entitled *Almas de Violeta* (1901). The epithets *rosa* and *violeta* are fairly frequent in his work. There is morbidity, too, in the recurrence of the adjectives *melancólico, romántico*, while a line such as “y en el landó forrado de viejo raso malva” is perishable stuff that will not last longer than much of the verse of Rostand, and words like *corsé* and *parterre* would be sufficiently hideous and terrible in Spanish prose, not to speak of poetry.

Yet the occasions on which Señor Jiménez' already large body of verse sinks to earth are surprisingly few (as in the phrase *de todas clases*, which occurs in the same poem as the word *parterres*, to which exception has already been taken). As a rule it maintains an astonishingly high level. The poems in which he has employed rhyme show that his poetry might gain rather than lose by its more frequent use; for this poet, who is so careless of rhyme, and sometimes of rhythm, and goes out of his way to cut a word or a phrase in twain and introduces far sought newfangled words into his verse, is very quiet and natural in the use of rhyme, when he does use it, while the rhyme helps to shape and concentrate what might tend to be the indefinite flow of his verse. He

would appear to have a keener sense of sound and colour in all their shades and subtleties than of definite shape; he is the impressionist painter rather than the sculptor, and his poetry is in fact an ever-flowing though transparent stream; it is perhaps interesting to notice that his favourite flowers are the scented flowers formed not of bold petals but of a hundred tiny flowerets: heliotrope, lilac, verbena, jasmine, whin, honeysuckle. Yet, in this minute and constant flow, how delicate is his ear for the pattern and construction of the verse!—

Y sobre la doliente luz monótona
del indolente sol, con trágico
é infantil sentimiento se agudizan,
finas, las hojas últimas
y amarillas de un árbol
leve
y lánguido.

His poetry is like a nocturne of Chopin played in the twilight, full of faint sounds and rustling silences and from time to time revealing some concrete lovely presence, the gleam of a star, the note of a bird, the mellow ringing of an Angelus bell:

Sólo turban la paz una campana, un pájaro:
parece que los dos hablan con el ocaso.

(*Silencio de Oro.*)

There is more of the concrete and the substantial in his work than one might imagine. This may be seen in the delicious prose of his *Platero y Yo*, in which poetry and reality are mingled without the omission of common things and with a charm and precision of words which produce definite pictures. That, for instance, of the autumn after-

LYRIC POETRY

noon: "Claras tardes del otoño muguereño! Cuando el aire puro de Octubre afila los límpidos sonidos, sube del valle un alborozo idílico de balidos, de rebuznos, de risas de niños, de ladridos y de campanillas"; that of the Corpus procession, of the mocking gipsy children, the idiot boy, the boy shepherd, the orange-seller's donkey-cart stuck fast in the mud, the little girl Blanea in one of the donkey's panniers: "soft, white and pink as the flower of peach," or the pretty little unwashed daughter of the charcoal-burner. Thus we read delightedly, as in an older story, of roses and the ass; there is a certain hardness underlying the beauty, *pedra* as well as *cielo*, but the poetry is always there, even in the smallest, humblest things: Platero drinks stars and water ("dos cubos de agua con estrellas") and his hoofs in the stream break the golden moon into small pieces ("entra en el arroyo, pisa la luna y la hace pedazos").

These concrete images are not confined to Señor Jimenez' prose. In his poetry likewise, the snowy-haired old woman goes up the flowered path in spring: the sky is blue, the lark is singing and the stream murmurs in the grass, but her thoughts are of her dying little grand-daughter Estrellita (*Pastorales*); thus we have the picture of the young mother and her child with hand outstretched to reach the cherries (*Diario de un poeta recién casado*); the little *carbonerilla* burnt to death in her mother's absence (*Historias*); girls coming in decked with flowers on the hay-carts; the aged *abuela*, with a merry *copla* running in her head from times past, going along the Spring-decked path with her sad and pensive grand-daughter; the peasants driving in their cows to market in the shade of the green poplars by the roadside. It is this definiteness and exactness which give an artistic, one might almost say an Italian finish to some of his verse.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

“Intelligence,” he cries, “give me the exact word for each thing. May my word be the thing itself, created anew by my spirit!” (*Eternidades*).

More often, no doubt, he is the vague dreamer, whose thoughts wander between earth and heaven:

Tesoros del azul
que un día y otro en vuelo repetido
traigo a la tierra. Polvo de la tierra
que un día y otro llevo al cielo. (*Piedra y Cielo.*)

His soul is vexed with immortal longings (*afanes imposibles; anhelos de cien cosas que no fueron*); he searches for the “hidden beauty” of things; and his *poemas mágicos y dolientes* are filled with elegiac regret, until his song becomes the echo of a song rather than the song itself—or, as it were, a shadow cast before:

Canción mía,
canta antes de cantar. (*Piedra y Cielo.*)

It sings before and after, in memory and anticipation:

¿Soy? Seré!
seré, hecho onda
del río del recuerdo.

He hovers musically about the ghosts of things, the broken petals:

O gracia rota, O sueño azul deshecho!

and feels, like Albert Samain (with whom he has been compared),

l'infini de douceur qu'ont les choses brisées.

Much of his poetry is the

LYRIC POETRY

fin sin fin de una rota armonía sin nombre,
jamás en la idea apagada. (*Laberinto.*)

His song becomes

la rosa abierta
de las voces todas que no hablan

or is shot through with

una antigua alegría
de olores y de esencias.

Or it subtly recaptures

un aire
viejo que estaba cantando
no sé quién por otro valle; (*Arias Tristes.*)
suspiros rotos
de coplas que se cantaron
por las sendas, al retorno. (*Pastorales.*)

His senses delight in "delicate and strange intuitions" or his
thought

se hunde
en abismos fantásticos, inmensos, e inefables. (*Libros de Amor.*)

Yet here again his art is not of things entirely insubstantial,

Light that is scarcely light, light that is scent
Of flowers, wholly peace.

Few poets have shown a more exquisite sensibility towards
the moods of Nature; but if the Nature described is a re-
flection of the poet's spirit, the expression of the

idilio dormido
en el fondo de mi alma,

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

it also dwells concretely in his mind and heart. Nature, such as he sees it, and his soul are one:

the valley
Seems unto me a valley of the soul;
 my heart

was like a darkening cloud
above the sunset's fire;
Hard stars and seas unplumbed,
and thoughts of other, virgin lands:
these are my soul;
In my breast lies the dawn,
and in my back the sunset:
How fearfully my life
Is rent from out the whole;
My soul is sister to the withered leaves
and to the heavens grey.
the trees their sorrows have,
the branches feel.

In the dedication of this volume (*Pastorales*) to Don Gregorio Martínez Sierra, he says that "my heart seems like a landscape." It is perhaps scarcely necessary to remark that this Nature in which the poet's soul merges itself and which merges itself in the poet's soul until they are completely identified, is not the whole of Nature but a limited if exquisite view of it. The poet may declare that the dawn is in his breast and the sunset in his back, but mountain ranges and rushing torrents and sounding forests are more uncomfortable guests; the *desgarradura* would have to be even greater if they are to be harboured. These wilder aspects of Nature have no echo in his lyrics. In a storm in the mountains, he finds that "the notion of things is lost" (*Melancolía*), and the sea for him is the glancing, laughing sea of halcyon days, rustling in its *ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα*:

LYRIC POETRY

Mar del sur en abril, amor; O golondrinas,
breves noches con alma de auroras transparentes;
A la tarde, las brisas se tornan más divinas.
Las golondrinas van en las olas indolentes.

(*Historias.*)

His Nature is confined chiefly to gardens and scenes such as Watteau painted. He himself describes the poems of *Laberinto* as "scenes and editions of a literary Watteau, a little more subjective and less optimistic than his pictures." He sings of the "gentle sadness of the country" and of gardens of

araucarias, magnolieros,
tilos, chopos, lilas, plátanos. (*Jardines Lejanos.*)

Cities, like the sea, can enter his spirit only in the distance of a dream, white as lilies or marble:

Ciudades de cristal, de azucena, de mármol,
aléjanse en un sueño de cumbres de frescura.

Señor Jiménez is not a poet to be imitated; one hopes that he will not found a school. He himself changes and develops and has now shed most of his modernist trappings. Mannerisms matter but little when there is a fundamental sincerity; Señor Jiménez is sincere and a true poet. His aim is to be simple and spontaneous, as he has recently informed us. His poetry holds a high place in the Spanish literature of the Twentieth Century and it will retain it. Señor Jiménez repeats himself, quotes himself, and imposes himself; the reader may at first be disconcerted and try to protest, but very soon he becomes fascinated, as a bird by a snake, and it is noticeable that the repetition of this poet's verse seems

to increase its value, bringing out much that had escaped one on a first reading.

In reading this poet of the extreme South-west of Spain, one is reminded sometimes of Becquer and of Rubén Darío and Rosalía de Castro; at other times one thinks of Leopardi or Chénier or Heine or Baudelaire or Verlaine. He has been strongly influenced by the primitive Spanish poets, by Góngora and by the popular poetry (the *romances*). In a lyric such as *Verde verderol* (*Baladas de Primavera*) he is half Góngora (the early Góngora) and half popular. But as he has a true and constant lyric vein, he stands out distinct and different from all these influences.

The singular fascination of his poetry lies not in its thought or construction but in the flowing pliant numbers which every now and then concentrate and crystallize, oh, so *crystalinamente*, into a finer, more perfect poem and subtle but more definite effect:

Mañana alegre de otoño,
cielo azul, y sobre el cielo
azul las hojas de oro
de los jardines enfermos;

colores májicos del poniente enarbolado;

O plenitud de oro! Eneanto verde y lleno
de pájaros! Arroyo de azul, cristal y risa!
O soledad sonora! Mi corazón sereno
se abre, como un tesoro, al soplo de tu brisa. (*Elejías.*)

His elegiac poetry is crowded with *nostalgias* but they are not dully abstract but of a glowing intensity: *nostalgias encendidas*; and so it abounds in concrete pregnant phrases: *la ventana se enciende, oros lentos, lento ocaso, crepúsculos líricos*,

LYRIC POETRY

auroras de tormenta, claridades plácidas, estrellas desgranadas, the *blanco mañanero* of the frosted flowers. Often the effect is produced by suggestion, in disconnected phrases, and his art becomes softly *staccato* (one thinks again of Chopin and of one liquid note emerging distinct from a stream of melody):

Nubes blancas y estrellas. Mar de fondo. A lo lejos
arde el faro (*Poemas Mágicos y Dolientes*);

una alondra mañanera
subió del surco cantando
'Mañana de primavera' (*Jardines Lejanos*);
Nadie. Un pájaro. Dios (*Poesías Agrestes*);

El campo es todo
bruma y rocío. La alondra (*Pastorales*).

There we have the modernist who, with the economy of a true artist but also with his loyalty to the beautiful, can convey a whole scene in four words.

Compared with this delicate poetry, the work of two pioneers in modernism, Don Salvador Rueda and Don Eduardo Marquina, now appears, if not antiquated, at least to have paused half-way. The poetry of Don EDUARDO MARQUINA is various and progressive. He has no great gift of concentration, and a vague symbolism and a vague epic strain run through much of his work; for both of these tendencies he is perhaps indebted to the Portuguese poet Guerra Junqueiro, whose complete works he translated into Spanish. To the new modernist poetry he early succumbed. There are passages in *Vendimión*, the work which many consider his greatest poetical achievement, that read almost like an intentional caricature of modernist poems: for instance, "The dawn| the bright dawn| the dawn full of grace| the dawn in

trembling robe| the sounding dawn| of clear voices| the dawn."

The verses beginning "*Una lanza de luz*" show a sensitiveness in which Becquer joins hands with J. R. Jiménez. *Vendimión* is but a shadowy figure ("*tiempo, vendimión de todas las vendimias*") loosely linking together a large number of poems of various theme and metre. Much of the poetry contained in this volume is too vigorous, sonorous and emphatic to suit the modernist school, but when Time finally washes out the baskets, something of *Vendimión* will probably prove permanent. The same vigour characterizes Señor Marquina's dramatic poems, patriotic historical dramas such as *En Flandes se ha puesto el sol* and *Por los pecados del rey*, in which María Candado represents the Spanish people, and the Count-Duke Olivares is portrayed as the oppressor, and the weak changeable king as his puppet. It is as a poet, not as a dramatist, that Señor Marquina chiefly interests us, and his poetic vein appears even in the prose play *Cuando florezcan los rosales*, the old story (with a new ending) of the rivalry between two girls for the love of one man. In his historical plays he shows a conscientious study of the period, a patriotic glow and an impressive and accomplished versification. The king says of María Candado:

she has spoken
with a vigorous Castilian voice,

and that was no doubt the author's intention, even though a modern romantic atmosphere sometimes intrudes. A genuine poet who should not be at the mercy of any school, Señor Marquina is likely to produce even finer work than that which he has hitherto given to the world, work of a true lyrical inspiration, with the added simplicity and concentration

LYRIC POETRY

brought by the years and the consciousness that his gift is primarily lyrical. Were it not that his volume of verse, *En Tropel*, appeared with a preface from the pen of Rubén Darío, one might hesitate to place Don SALVADOR RUEDA among the modernists. He belongs to the forerunners of modernism, but not in the same sense as do Rosalía de Castro and Becquer. They were intimate, hushed voices; Rueda was an explosion. Whether his verse is singing of green Asturias in *En Tropel*, or, more frequently, of his native Málaga and Andalucía, it is full of life, colour and energy and is essentially objective. There is little softness or intimate depth in his poetry. His sonorous, sometimes monotonously sonorous verse can faithfully reproduce Granada in a summer siesta or ballads sung to the sound of the *gaita* in the north or the southern spring breaking into flower:

Cuando al suelo de España, que no se agota,
llama Abril con el mazo de sus pinceles,
se rompen sus arterias, la sangre brota
y se cuaja en rotundos y amplios claveles.

In reading him, one is occasionally reminded of Schiller, one scarcely knows why. His *trompetas de órgano* sometimes have the rigidity and harshness of instruments of brass, and the introduction of such words as *bamboo*, *billar*, *pentagram*, *librecambista*, is characteristic rather of the freedom of the new school of poetry than of poetry. In his experiments in many metres, he helped to break up the more conventional poetry of the past, a fact which gives him an important place in the modernist movement. In doing so, he could not always avoid the snare of the prosaic, as in such lines as

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Montañés en su gran escultura
transmitióle un poder tan tremendo

or the picture of these sublime cows:

Pasan las vacas desbordando vida;
cada vaca parece un monumento.

A poet who, although modern enough, is a Parnassian, not a Symbolist, is the translator of Hérédia, Don ANTONIO DE ZAYAS, Duque de Amalfi, who exquisitely limns and chisels his verse, especially his sonnets, in *Joyeles Bizantinos* and other volumes. In such sonnets as that beginning "*Campanas de crepúsculo*" (*Campanas Pascuales*) and those of *Vasos de Arcilla*, Don FRANCISCO DE VILLAESPESA shows a like gift for plastically modelling his verse, but in his poetry of the little common things of earth ("ten un poco de amor para las cosas") there is a more spontaneous charm than in the marmoreal verse of Zayas, while in *Tristitiæ Rerum* he sings of Moorish palaces and of the "cármenes viejos de Granada" "algun florido carmen de Granada":

Corazón, corazón, sueña:
es de noche, todo calla.

From his elegiac poems of dusk and rain and *horas grises*, such sonnets as *La vieja casa sueña*, *Angelus* and *Saudades* stand out with a haunting appeal. He is one of the earliest of Spanish modernist poets, although the foreign influence in his work might seem rather Italian than French.

§ 4. THE CASTILIAN REACTION

Half-way between modernism and what may be called the Castilian reaction stands one of the foremost poets of the

LYRIC POETRY

day, by some critics regarded as the greatest living Spanish poet, the "luminous and profound" Don ANTONIO MACHADO. Son of the distinguished Seville folk-lorist Antonio Machado y Álvarez, he is in several ways unexpected and exceptional: a Sevillian who is a Castilian at heart, an *andaluz* who is almost dumb and who writes and publishes singularly little; a modernist who is not a modernist, although his most intimate friends belong to the Generation of 1898, a subjective poet who deals largely in what is objective, a *castizo* indigenous writer who is a Professor of French, a serene contemplative thinker with Radical tendencies:

Hay en mis venas gotas de sangre jacobina,
pero mi verso brota de manantial sereno.

It is perhaps in the fusion of the Castilian and Andalusian elements that his originality and power consist; certainly his poetry is marked by a combination of strength and music.

He has drawn his inspiration largely from Castile, and especially from the austere country round Soria, and has evidently plunged both hands in the popular poetry of the *romances* and *cantares*. With all their granite solidity, his octosyllabic verses have a wonderfully easy flow, as have the poems written in a combination of metres (eleven and seven syllables). He himself tells us that

Mi infancia son recuerdos de un patio de Sevilla
y un huerto claro donde madura el limonero;
mi juventud veinte años en tierra de Castilla.

So deeply did the slow charm of Castile sink into his spirit that when he returns to *estos campos de mi Andalucía* it is still of Soria and Castile that he dreams, as in *Recuerdos*:

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Cuantas veces te he soñado
en esta florida vega.

He sighs for the bare uplands and *grises calvijares*:

Suspiro por los yermos castellanos;
Mi corazón está aonde ha nacido
no a la vida, al amor, cerca del Duero.

And it is when it shows his spirit reflected in the land of Castile that his poetry is at its best; for instance, in *A orillas del Duero*, *Por tierras de España*, *Orillas del Duero*, *Las Encinas*, *En estos campos de la tierra mía*, *A José María Palacio*, *Desde mi rincón*. In the longest, the only long poem of *Nuevas Canciones*, entitled *Olivo del Camino*, he considers the old olive-tree of his poem as "twin-brother of the Castilian oak." The very names of Castilian towns and villages fall as music on his ear:

Fuencebada,
Fonfría, Oncala, Manzanal, Robledo.

At other times he expresses his philosophy of life humoristically, or in brief cries of the heart appears as a Southern, sunnier Pondal. As with Pondal, his pessimism finds vent not in subjective complaint but in objective pictures tinged with sadness. Even when he invites the girls to dance and sing of April, there seems to be an underlying melancholy of ancient traditions about the verse:

A la orilla del río
por el negro encinar
sus abarcas de plata
hemos visto brillar;
ya estan los prados verdes,
ya viene Abril galán.

LYRIC POETRY

He is aware of the objectivity of his verse. It is the objectivity of the thinker and dreamer who by a kind of reaction finds a delight in concrete things:

He who prefers the things of life to pictures
Is even he who thinks and sings and dreams.

His art gains by this concreteness, and its massive structure is withal interwoven with sound and colour in its rhythmic flow and can reproduce the slow clinking of the well-wheel in midsummer:

en una huerta sombría
giraban los cangilones de la noria soñolienta;

or the glowing splendours of the sunset:

La gloria del ocaso era un purpúreo espejo,
era un cristal de llamas;

or tell us of the *olla* simmering by the inn fire or of the eradle hung from the yoke of the oxen ploughing. Clearly this poet of the South has caught the concentrated intensity of Castile.

Of poets who influenced him, he refers to Gonzalo de Berceo, "poet and pilgrim," and to Ronsard:

Adoro la hermosura, y en la moderna estética
corté las viejas rosas del huerto de Ronsard.

But his real master has ever been

Castilla, mística y generosa,
Castilla la gentil, humilde y brava.

The authentic inspiration of Don ENRIQUE DE MESA belongs to no school. The quatrains in which he sings the

crag and stream and high passes of the Sierra de Guadarrama have the charm of popular *cantares* and the freshness and simplicity of the Archpriest of Hita's primitive *serranillas*. They sound merry and clear as the stream that flows down the flanks of Peñalara:

Y fué mi canción sencilla
 Moneda de mi terruño,
 honró su metal el cuño
 de la gloriosa Castilla.

His verse is filled with the scent and air of the *sierra*, set with concrete details, the rocks and pines and thyme and flocks. He has published very little. Five years separate *Tierra y Alma* from *Cancionero Castellano* and *El Silencio de la Cartuja*. His inspiration is essentially Castilian, blending heaven and earth, the material and spiritual, in an intimate communion.

A slightly earlier poet who also stood significantly apart is the poet of Castile and Extremadura, JOSÉ MARÍA GABRIEL Y GALÁN. There is nothing modernist about his poetry, which is an excellent example of all that modernism does not stand for. The poems in which he sings

la orilla
 del desierto de Castilla
 y el erial de Extremadura

discover a hundred charms in the uplands of Castile, "the undulating Castilian country," and in this resemble the poetry of Don Antonio Machado. They have great variety of metre, but move most at ease in the *quintilla*, the traditional *quintilla* of the Salamanca school. If in his unfailing sincerity and frequent didacticism this *rimador de Cas-*

LYRIC POETRY

tilla is occasionally prosaic and ethical rather than æsthetic, he finds constant inspiration in his love of Nature, of the soil, the peasants, the poor, the animals.

The *alma del terruño* and the peasantry of Castile, Extremadura and Las Hurdes live for us in his pages, which seem to be all scented with cistus and with thyme. With what art and precision he describes *las pardas azuladas cuestras, las olientes montaraces jaras, las grises lontananzas, los maizales susurrantes, el barbecho sin fin que amarillea*; in a word, all

la dulce poesía en que se impregnan
la llanura sin fin, toda quietudes,
y el magnífico cielo, todo estrellas.

Nearly always there is a glowing fire of love, life and enthusiasm sufficient to raise his verse above prose and to give a universal value to his regional poetry. Perhaps his best and most intimate verse is contained in the little volume of *Extremeñas* written in the dialect of Extremadura. In *Castellanas* his subject is no longer Extremadura of the blazing sun and blue-green olives, but Castile of the wide skies, brown bare undulating plains, grey-blue distances and immense open spaces. The poet sings of the serene middays and mysterious dawns of autumn, of the shepherd in his rough sheepskins, the humble troop of peasants returning from their distant labour and met near the village by their blithe-faced children, of the merry *algarabía* of the shepherds in the fields or the gay *romería* with pipe and drum and castanets.

Like Romanesque architecture, Gabriel y Galán's poetry does not soar; vigorous and original, it is more descriptive and well-balanced and harmonious than given to lyric flights.

He had lived the life of a peasant of Castile and enjoyed it:

He dormido en la majada sobre un lecho de lentiscos.

Although he was but thirty-five at the time of his death in 1905, his poems fill two volumes and give us the measure of what he could do. Had he lived, he might have written a Spanish *Hermann und Dorothea*: it would have resembled his shorter pieces, redolent of the soil. Born in a small village in the province of Salamanca, this son of peasants, this representative of the *charros*, became a village school-master during eight years, but the soil called him and he returned to till and sing it until the hour of his early death.

A more conscious reaction in favour of the Castilian tradition is seen in the tendency of the younger poets. Segovia seems to have cast its indigenous, archaic, living charm over the *Poemas Arcaicos*, *Poemas de Añoranzas*, *Sonetos Espirituales* and *Poemas Castellanos* of the MARQUÉS DE LOZOYA. Another poet who has not bowed the knee to Baal is Don MANUEL DE SANDOVAL, whose Castilian inspiration is revealed in his *Cancionero* (1909), *Musa Castellana* (1911) and *De mi cercado* (1912). Don LUIS FERNÁNDEZ ARDAVÍN, author of *Meditaciones* (1914), *La Eterna Inquietud* (1921), *La Dama del Armiño* (1922), a play in which the central figure is that of El Greco, and *Láminas de folletín y de misal* (1923), likewise has points of contact with the traditional school. This tendency is less marked in *La Flor de los Años*, a volume of poems published in 1923 by Don EMILIANO RAMÍREZ ANGEL, hitherto mainly known as a prose-writer. The younger Spanish poets are numerous, and they take their art seriously, evidently convinced of the fact that all the world's greatest poets, with an enthusiasm which no drudgery could dull, have diligently

LYRIC POETRY

disciplined and perfected their genius. More than one writer and volume of verse might be mentioned, but it is perhaps preferable to leave these poets at the outset of their career to the just and merciless hands of time.

IV. THE ESSAY

IV. THE ESSAY

§ 1. GANIVET

THE ESSAY, dealing with high matters of religion and statesmanship, is of course very old in Spanish literature and flourished in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But the brief critical essay, such as we know it, as a *genre* by itself, treating of literature *et de omni re scibili*, is modern and began its independent period of prosperity in the hands of the critical and analytical Generation of 1898. Previously, born essayists, such as Juan Valera and *Clarín*, were known as novelists and wrote their essays by the way, in the form of reviews, academic discourses or introductions. Valera published more than one volume of such essays, *Disertaciones y Juicios Literarios* and *El Superhombre y otras novedades*. Menéndez y Pelayo published five volumes of critical essays. But the essay had not yet become, so to speak, secular and profane; it had not attained, on the one hand, universality of subject-matter nor, on the other, the personal, subjective note. In this respect ANGEL GANIVET was one of its first exponents. Ganivet was also a novelist, but his genius was really rather that of the modern essayist, and as such he will always be considered and admired.

In judging him, one should remember that he died *nel mezzo del cammin*. We do not read him for his clear but colourless style nor for the plot and adventures of his novels. These novels, *La Conquista del Reino de Maya* and *Los*

Trabajos del infatigable creador Pío Cid, are of considerable length; they lack the vivid interest of Herman Melville, but in their sober narrative may possibly have exercised some influence on Señor Baroja. There are sentences in *La Conquista del Reino de Maya* which remind one forcibly of the author of the *Memorias de un Hombre de Acción*: We read Ganivet for the ideas and observations scattered through these books and for the original thought, combined at times with Andalusian imagination and even fancifulness; which found its highest expression in the pages of his *Idearium Español*. In this remarkable essay Ganivet's spirit wove itself into that of modern Spain and won him an enduring place in her literature.

It dwells on the importance of the philosophy of Seneca and the Stoics in Spanish thought, its modification by Christianity, the reaction of Spanish Christianity against the Arabs and later against the Reformation; the influence of Spain's peninsular situation on her character and policy, independent but not aggressive (the Spanish Armada itself was a defensive piece of aggression, the natural defence of a man when one sings his beard); the territorial spirit from which sprang the *conquistadores* as well as the brigands and *guerrilleros*; the sense of justice and the disregard for the written impersonal law; the lack of system and methodical talent, the abundance of genius, resulting in masterpieces produced half inadvertently, such as *La Celestina* and *Don Quixote*; the alternating imitation and independence in Spanish art; the history and foreign policy of Spain since the days of the Emperor Charles V; her relations with Portugal, England, America, Morocco and the East; and, lastly, the importance of serious persistent will for the construction of Spain's legitimate spiritual power and influence.

Ganivet writes with an un-Castilian thinness; his thought is marked by clearness and precision, and if he does not always penetrate to the heart of a matter, he at least very fleetly hits the right nail on the head. His lucid and original essay is discursive and ill-proportioned, a promise rather than a masterpiece. It was the work of a most enlightened and patriotic but impartial spirit. Its sober appeal has lost none of its force in the quarter of a century which has elapsed since it was written.

§ 2. ESSAYISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: UNAMUNO

The shipwrecked Odysscus in Señor Pérez de Ayala's story comes at last to an ancient city long dead, a city of silence, where in a world of shadows he consults Teiresias, a learned man with an owl-like face. In *El Ombligo del Mundo* the owl is transferred to Asturias in the person of the sober Don Juan Hurtado, with something of the look of a Protestant clergyman and an *elocuencia penetrante y fantástica*. There is no doubt that Don MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO, for whom Teiresias here stands, is very much alive in Salamanca. Indeed, the chief characteristic of this Basque born at Bilbao is an amazing energy, with which he combines great subtlety of intellect. A lover and weaver of paradoxes, he is himself a paradox (is not all life a paradox?), for he has attained a certain greatness despite his megalomania, and possesses a wide and deep sympathy despite his egotism. Because of his egotism, he would say. "Lo singular no es particular, es universal," he remarks in *Del Sentimiento Trágico de la Vida*, and he has always acted on the belief that the way to study mankind is to study oneself, embracing in oneself all the manifold strivings and interests of mankind.

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

For him, far from the *moi* being *haïssable*, the *yo* is everything. "There is no other I in the world. Each one of us is absolute. If there is a God who has made and maintains the world, he made it and maintains it for me. There is no other I. There are greater ones and less, better and worse, but no other I. I am something entirely new; in me is summed up a past eternity and with me a future eternity starts" (*Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*). The principle has its dangers, since the self, thus nourished by mankind, may grow and swell and become unmanageable. In an interesting passage, Señor Unamuno says of the Basques that "my fellow-countrymen are very greatly afraid of becoming marked or singular in any way, and the result is that when we break through this fear and shake off our shamefacedness it is difficult to stop us" (*Recuerdos de Niñez y de Mocedad*). The modern world has little place for the Greek sophist, the juggler with ideas or the disinterested seeker after truth; much less for one who feels his duty to stir up irritation. "To irritate people may come a duty, a painful duty, but a duty still," says Unamuno, and again: "We must sow in men the seeds of doubt, of distrust, of disquiet and even of despair" (*Soliloquios y Conversaciones*).

He has somewhat cruelly been called a little Nietzsche. He belongs to the Generation of 1898 and, like the other members of that group, represents rather a preparation than an achievement, a work of demolition in order that others may build the more nobly. It is good that there should be one Unamuno but not that he should have active disciples, as he would himself admit, for he is, above all, an individualist. If he set himself up as an example for others to follow, some of his sayings would be inexcusable,

emphatically does not. What he says is: Do not follow me or anyone; think things out and be sincere and yourself. What Azorín sought to do for Spanish prose, by pulling down the great edifices and dislocating the formal structure; what the Modernists wished to do for verse, reducing what a Spanish critic described as "the brilliant artificial oratorical poetry" to malleable stuff and more individual sincerity; what Señor Benavente did for the drama, converting its pomp and emphasis into a more insinuating subtlety (what, one might almost add, Don Mariano de Benlliure did for sculpture, reducing it to a lace-like music and pictorial scenes), Don Miguel de Unamuno undertook to do in the realm of ideas, probing, sifting, criticizing, analysing, refining, disintegrating, "to see whether the collective genius of our people may not gradually become more flexible and subtle" (*Niebla*).

One may hope that good will result, for his spirit is not really negative; but the process itself necessarily aroused enmity and distrust. His critical method irritated its victims, and their irritation in turn disturbed his serenity, so that he belaboured his critics, accusing them of dullness and hypocrisy. He himself has the directness of the Basque, and would consider it a kind of cowardice not to face life thoroughly and not to express in words whatever occurs to his thought. He is concerned primarily with life, with man. "Landscape," he says, "only is art in, by and for man" (*Ensayos*, III, 83); and: "The humblest, most obscure life is worth infinitely more than the greatest work of art" (*Ensayos*, I, 44).

For him it is no mere paradox to say that there is more life in war than in peace and that an inquisitor is more sane than a shopkeeper: "the inquisitor, when he acts

sincerely, treats me as a man, as an end in itself, since if he hurts me it is in the charitable desire to save my soul; whereas the shopkeeper merely considers me as a customer, as a means, and his indulgent toleration is really but the most complete indifference as to my destiny. The inquisitor is much more humane" (*Del Sentimiento Trágico de la Vida*).

Making his study primarily man, Señor Unamuno rides, a modern Quixote, full tilt against all pretence and hypocrisy, against dogmatism, set phrases, formulas, shibboleths and labels ("labelling things is no solution"), against mummied creeds and conventions, against generalities and vague abstractions (in his love of the concrete, as in his energetic vigour, he is a true Basque, and one remembers in reading him that the Basque language has words for various kinds of trees, but for the general word tree itself has to go to the Latin *arbor: arbora*). He denounces "our foolish gravity" and "fierce individualism" (*atomismo*), "our society composed of cliques which hate without knowing one another" and the "disciplinarian authority," the imposed opinions of political parties. He attacks with equal force intellectual sluggishness and specializing in any form, in learning or philosophy or as a "fabricator of novels," hating all that is mechanical or professional. Not tradition but *tradicionalismo*, the professional cult of tradition, is the object of his hostility. He derides the "spiritual parasites" who support themselves on the faith of others, as a hermit planting cabbages perfected by generations of men might profess to live without human aid. He wages war not only on *odium theologicum* but on *odium anti-theologicum*, and is equally opposed to anarchism as a system as to a dogmatic church.

“Progress is apt to become a more degrading and vile superstition than all those which it attacks” (*Ensayos*).

He might be called a Roman Catholic anarchist, and if the two things seem incompatible, their juxtaposition at least implies the fundamentally constructive trend and character of Señor Unamuno's anarchism; for although he is so restless a combatant, levelling his lance against all these things, he is really fighting all the time against negations, against the narrow, unthinking, lifeless and inert, whether the inertness be due to laziness or to cowardice and fear of ridicule. Above all, he refuses to accept anything at its face value, or as having more than its individual significance. “Of all tyrannies,” he says, “the most hateful is that of ideas; there is no eraey more odious than ideocraey, bringing as it necessarily does in its train ideophobia, the persecution, in the name of ideas, of others, as much ideas as they are, as worthy of respect or disrespect as they. I hate all labels, but the label that I would find most bearable, would be that of ‘ideoclast,’ idea-breaker. How do I mean to break them? Like boots, by making them mine and using them” (*Ensayos*).

Much of his work, especially the Essays, is stimulating and thought-provoking. It always has a most un-Latin vigour. He has succeeded through sheer force of will in welding his prose into a personal and effective instrument. The essential value of his work is not its æsthetic quality, not even its thought, but its power to attract and repel, to make one decide for oneself; and this disturbing element is welcome in an age when education tends more and more to reduce men to a superficial resemblance, like clipped poodles. In the midst of this uniformity, Señor Unamuno sets him-

self to probe and goad with heart-searchings and paradoxes, a painful but salutary operation. He loves and understands Spain and Castile, and although he derives much of the basis, the starting-points of his thought, from foreign sources and is well-read in all the modern and ancient literatures of Europe, especially in that of England, he is essentially Spanish, one might almost say Iberian, and has an original mind. "‘Have no illusions,’ once said to me a friend of mine, a foreigner, believing me to be, although a Spaniard, European and modern; ‘the Spanish generally are incapable of and opposed to modern civilization.’ And I amazed and horrified him by answering, ‘And is that a misfortune?’" (*Ensayos*).

When Señor Unamuno describes a game of *pelota* in *De mi país* or journeys to the mountains and wildernesses and to the ancient towns of Castile, as in *Por tierras de Portugal y de España* and *Andanzas y Visiones Españolas*, or the *quinta* of La Flecha in *Paisajes*, or recalls memories of his youth at Bilbao in *Recuerdos de Niñez y de Mocedad*, he wins over all the critics. As a poet he has been very variously judged. Considerably influenced by foreign poets, especially the bitter poets, by the sonnets of Anthero de Quental or the odes of Leopardi, by Carducci and the Nature poetry of Wordsworth, his *Poesías* display sincerity and poetic feeling, but the effort is apparent in the rhyme and metre and is not always crowned with success. Such lines as "A tomar en lo eterno, por fin, puerto" (p. 9) or "Que el fuerte siempre la piedad le inspira" (p. 318) can with difficulty be fitted into any metre. The poems seem to be driven along by sheer will-power rather than by æsthetic sense. The same may be said of the *Rosario de Sonetos Líricos*, a series of 128 sonnets written during five months of the year

THE ESSAY

1910 and chiselled with a strong will and deep sincerity. He quotes Hazlitt's saying that the sonnet is a sigh uttered from the fullness of the heart, and that would be no unfair description of these sonnets, although for "sigh" one would sometimes have to substitute "cry." Their thought is various, but the diction is monotonous, and the "musical numbers" too often absent. Occasionally, however, they attain smoothness and even softness of expression. Most of them are plainly hammered out, the work of a keen intellect and anguished heart rather than of a poetical creator for whom thought naturally clothes itself in beauty. In *El Cristo de Velazquez*, again, intellect and will-power force the thought on to the paper, and, being stronger than the artistic capacity, drive it along with so straight, one had almost said so fierce and relentless a determination that the reader, at first attracted and interested, grows wearied and overcome by the vigorous monotony of the verse. This religious poem of two or three thousand lines of blank verse is difficult to read through and difficult for the critic to judge: five lines taken from it anywhere at random will seem more impressive than the whole poem; but that is true to some extent also of *Paradise Lost*.

As a novelist Don Miguel de Unamuno is known chiefly by his early work *Paz en la Guerra*, in which he wove recollections of his youth at Bilbao into the description of the siege of that city in the second Carlist War. If the book has any sustained link of interest, it is that of the Carlist War, not that of the private action; nor, despite the keen psychology, do any of the characters stand out in memory; but the separate scenes and incidents imprinted on the mind of a child often have a vivid truth. Señor Unamuno's more recent and briefer novels, *Niebla*, *Abel Sánchez*, *La Tía*

Tula and the three short stories entitled *Tres Novelas Ejemplares y un Prólogo*, more intellectual and subtle, read perhaps more like problems in geometry than pieces of life, although in a sense they are more living than the earlier *Amor y Pedagogía*. Other novelists have lashed their characters along with whips, Señor Unamuno chastises his with scorpions: he literally flogs his characters into life, bringing all his heart and will and intellect to their creation. And sometimes with success, just as he has forced his style into fluency; although they perhaps inevitably retain about them the marks of their creator. It is possibly the consciousness of this (for a strong wind does not often blow alternately in two directions) that has prevented this writer in so many kinds from devoting much attention to the drama. The death scene in *La Tía Tula* is in a certain sense dramatic, but we still feel that it is Don Miguel de Unamuno, dressed up as Doña Tula on her deathbed, who is speaking, much like the wolf in *Little Red Riding-hood*.

Two earlier books are at once more important and more human. *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* is a long social and political discourse, a kind of lay sermon engrafted on the text of *Don Quixote*, with parallels from the life of San Ignacio de Loyola. It is concerned not with Cervantes' work as a literary masterpiece, not indeed with Cervantes at all, but with the living Don Quixote developed by the centuries and outgrowing his original creator. "I feel myself more Quixotist than Cervantist, and my aim is to free Don Quixote from Cervantes." But hatred of pedantry may entail a new pedantry. *Don Quixote* is life, but it is also literature, and although the vintage may be a most beautiful and interesting sight, the mellow wine in the cellar

is by no means negligible. This commentary is one of Señor Unamuno's most characteristic works.

In *Del Sentimiento Trágico de la Vida* we find him attempting to construct a systematic treatise and philosophy, and failing. We see how difficult it is for him to bind together the separate ingenious thoughts and fancies. But if he failed to compose a methodical work, he nevertheless wrote a work of great interest. Its chief value lies less in its original thought than in its life and vigour, showing once more a constructive spirit in the true Spanish tradition. Written with his whole being, in disdain of "those who think only with their brains," it wrestles fiercely and with bitter sincerity for life, for immortality. He finds the proof of immortality less in reason than in the very desire for immortality: "my longing to live and to live for ever"; "it is not a necessity of reason but a need of the spirit that makes us believe in God"; "I wish God to exist"; "I require the immortality of my soul." And if immortality be conditional, so eager a spirit as that of Señor Unamuno, maintaining itself supple and young, may be sure that it has conquered for itself at least a goodly span of life beyond the grave. If it is not always closely reasoned, *Del Sentimiento Trágico de la Vida* is continually suggestive, often subtle, occasionally profound. It is not without significance that the author, at the end of the book, refers to it as "*estes ensayos.*" He prefers suggestion to method, and were he to construct some watertight system of philosophy, caulked implacably with logic and reason, the first thing he would probably do would be to burn it, as an insult to high Heaven and the many miracles around us.

It is in these essays on immortality, in the seven volumes

of *Ensayos* and in the essays of *Contra Esto y Aquello* and *Soliloquios y Conversaciones*, that we must look for the true Unamuno. Here he is free, alert, stimulating, many-sided and fundamentally serious in the midst of apparently superficial paradoxes. The *Ensayos* were written at various times between 1895 and 1911. They deal with subjects so various as the Castilian language, the spirit of Castile, mysticism, modern Spain, the teaching of Latin, the drama, religion, patriotism, modern civilization, education, Madrid, Carlyle, individualism, philosophy, politics, *Don Quixote*, Izaak Walton, poetry, criticism, the administration of justice, the relations between Spain and the rest of Europe; but they are concerned primarily with two subjects: the Spanish language and the soul of man. Señor Unamuno is not, would perhaps scorn to be, a professional philologist, but language has for him a perpetual and essentially human interest. "We should all care about everything," he says in one of the essays of *Soliloquios y Conversaciones*, and he has himself lived up to the required standard. It is his weakness and his strength.

With his energy, keenness, persistence and subtlety he might have excelled in some one department of learning, but in becoming a specialist he would have been less himself. As it is, he has always kept a living curiosity beneath his erudition, and his voracious reading has not dulled but whetted his appetite for knowledge. Tireless in excursions through the whole of modern and part of ancient thought, as well as in the remote parts of Spain, he has enriched his personality by setting himself unreservedly to drink in ideas and impressions. "I would have things and facts and mysteries tell me not what I wish but what they wish." Thus he arises every morning with a mind made blank and recep-

tive, and we must not expect from him any systematic work, either of thought or philology. "I have always believed the important thing to be not to know things quickly but to know them well," he remarks, a Spanish sentiment which runs counter to modern civilization; but Señor Unamuno's penetrating intelligence seizes the essence of a thing and passes on too rapidly, without time to order, compare, classify or build.

He is so busy extracting the kernels from the husks that he scarcely has time to digest the kernels. He confesses "the incurable manysidedness of my curiosity, my spirit attentive to everything that happens everywhere." That and a certain pessimism ("although life itself is but a long and usually very lamentable digression") may prevent him from doing more than browse in many fields of literature; but if during the next twenty years, leaving on one side poetry and novels, politics and unprofitable curiosity, he concentrates on the essay or merely on stringing together individual thoughts, he may yet give us an *Idearium Español* which will throw that of Ganivet deep into the shade and prove an enduring masterpiece.

When we remember that hardly anyone can give a name to the commonest things about him in his daily life, to the different parts, for instance, of a house, a boat, a cart, a dress, a horse, a flower, we will welcome a writer for whom nothing is too small or unimportant to awaken curiosity and interest, and who laments that education should insist on exotic knowledge "without attracting our attention to what surrounds us, with which we are least acquainted." When we consider that many, most persons pass through life in an obdurate dullness ("no one cares about anything," complains Señor Unamuno, as one crying in the wilderness),

without curiosity or admiration for the marvels and miracles continually coming to pass, from the sun's glorious birth or the flight of an aeroplane to a street urchin or a snowdrop in the grass, we will not heedlessly reject one who persists in stirring up men's minds and making them alive. If we accept Señor Unamuno as an intellectual exercise, we may accord him a very high place in contemporary Spanish literature. "My tendency," he says, "has always been rather to suggest than to instruct" (for as an individualist he would consider all active influence immoral); and he ends one of his essays with the words, "And at least have curiosity." But Teiresias, although frequently consulted, stands alone, aloof, *solo y señoero* (Señor Unamuno is anything rather than a Unamunist or Unanimist), a strong driving force, to whom courageous effort rather than attainment is the breath of life.

§ 3. AZORÍN

To consider Azorín (the pseudonym which has honourably eclipsed the name of Don José Martínez Ruiz as completely as *Clarín* eclipsed that of Leopoldo Alas) as an essayist is due not to a wish to diminish the glory of Azorín but rather to exalt the essay, which is as worthy of a great place in literature as the novel, the short story or the work of the historian. He may be held to share with Señor Unamuno the pre-eminence in the modern Spanish essay; but while Señor Unamuno rushes courageously, aggressively, into the fray, Azorín, like the careful robin watching the delver's toil, with a quiet observant eye stands a little apart, singing his restrained and charming plain-song.

At first, indeed, for he began writing perhaps a little too

THE ESSAY

soon and published his first book in 1893, he was aggressive enough. When he began to write, the critics were busy proclaiming that literature must be not literary but life and that rhetoric and eloquence must have their necks wrung. The young Azorín played the part of literary iconoclast, determined not only to break up the pomp and splendour of sonorous Castilian but to take from their pedestals and thoroughly dust all the literary gods. The celebrated Generation of 1898, of which he was a leading spirit, were in fact rebels against Castile; and it is curious to see how Castile has quietly absorbed them, so that from these very writers, from the Basques Unamuno and Baroja and Azorín of the East Coast, have come some of the most keenly appreciative pages of modern literature concerning Castile and the Castilian language and literature.

The drama of Spain's Golden Age, the mystics and such modern classics as Menéndez y Pelayo have not only withstood the criticism of Azorín but have gradually asserted their dominion over his own mind. Azorín, who had begun as a literary critic and essayist, came prominently before the world with a novel, *La Voluntad*, at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. In this book Azorín and his master Yuste philosophize gently and sadly in a provincial town. There is no plot. Azorín, indeed, is engaged to Justina (the niece of an old priest), who becomes a nun instead; but she scarcely figures in the novel. The author throughout appears to be saying to the reader: "I have no imagination; use yours. My task is to suggest, to outline; if you will, you may fill in the picture." Let us listen to Yuste: "This defect," he says, "this eloquence and correctness of dialogue, insupportably false, goes from Cervantes to Galdós. In life one does not so speak; one speaks in-

coherently, with pauses, in brief, incorrect, natural sentences. The novel is far, very far from its perfect expression. This inartistic, cold coherence and correctness which we blame in the dialogue pervades the whole plot. And, to begin with, there should not be any plot. Life has no plot; it is various, many-sided, floating, contradictory, everything except symmetrical, rigidly geometrical, as it appears in novels" (*La Voluntad*). Thus the novelist is to give only fragmentary impressions, while the drama must cease to exist: "all life cannot be compressed into one volume, and it will be enough if we give ten, twenty, or forty sensations. This is indeed the essential defect of the drama and for this reason the drama is a commercial art, outside literature."

Here, then, we have the theory which has wrought such havoc among modern writers, reducing some of them to a kind of jazz-band, and which will continue to produce disastrous effects until critics have the courage to proclaim that literature must be first and foremost literary. Life, let us repeat, is the vintage, literature the good selected wine, having the glow and concentration of good wine. The classic writers often succeed in conveying colour without naming it and can give a whole picture by means of one concentrated epithet. Azorín's passion was for analysis, detail and precision; and, so far as the language was concerned, this was very welcome. The old conventional "roses and lilies" were resolved into their individual kinds. It was Azorín's triumph to realize that in a language so rich and beautiful as Castilian the mere application of the proper names, archaic or otherwise, to the common things all around one, the plants and flowers, the pots and pans, might create a masterpiece of style. Artistically as well as spiritually, one might move *entre los pucheros*. In other words, style was

to be based not on a vague and eloquent enthusiasm but through enthusiasm on precise knowledge. That was the secret of the excellence of Padre Sigüenza's prose: he was so intimately acquainted with the Escorial that he knew the exact word for every detail of its architecture. Azorín applied this familiar knowledge to the *cosas vulgares* of every day and can thus fascinate us merely by the description of the furniture in a peasant's dwelling.

High-sounding rhetorical sentences, relative clauses, metaphors and similes were banned. In this artificial revolt against the artificial, his style was to be reduced to a crowd of separate nouns, like gravel without sand. "The study has a high ceiling and clean walls. Its furniture is two arm-chairs, a rocking-chair, six ordinary chairs, a small table, a large table and a side-table. The arm-chairs are upholstered with large pattern of white and red oleanders on a grey ground. The rocking-chair is of wood and round. The other chairs are light and fragile, with black polished frames and openwork seats and backs of triple arch. The small table is round; it is laden with folios bound in parchment and small yellow volumes. The larger table is for writing; the side-table near it supplies a store of books and papers" (*Antonio Azorín*). And if there must be selection, it will be by omission, in which Azorín presently proved himself a master, so that his later works no longer contained passages which read like the notes of a too scrupulous observer, who, in his anxiety to record faithfully, fails to distinguish between the significant and the unessential.

A series of mannerisms to which the critics took exception, the too frequent use of the *yo* before a verb, the war on pronouns, in a veritable apotheosis of the common noun, were

also gradually shed, while he retained his thin, short sentences and his use of the verb in the present tense. The success of *La Voluntad* led to a continuation of its philosophizing and dissection of *las vidas opacas* in Yecla, "the city of bells" and the East coast, questionings of sense and outward things, in *Antonio Azorín* and *Las Confesiones de un Pequeño Filósofo*, deliberately fragmentary, suggestive, occasionally charming. The reader who may be inclined to think the work too slight should consider how, for instance, in *Las Confesiones de un Pequeño Filósofo*, Padre Miranda in a few lines stands before us complete and unforgettable, as though we had been given a full description instead of merely being informed that he was short and excessively stout.

Sketches of humble lives, impressionist descriptions of Nature (*emoción del paisaje*) but without vagueness, being always presented with detailed precision of language, these were the two main aspects of Azorín's art, over which he threw a subtle melancholy charm and gentle emotion; and later, when he turned to the evocation of ancient writers ("to bring into the light works which are as yet imperfectly appreciated by their readers," as he says in *Al Margen de los Clásicos*), his method had not really changed; he had merely substituted old Spanish folios for old Spanish towns and continued his delicate reconstruction of life and literature.

A succession of sketches of Spain, *Los Pueblos*, *La Ruta de Don Quijote*, *España*, culminated in *Castilla*. Their fragmentary character (yet how complete is the picture finally in our minds!) was due partly to the author's theory of literary composition, partly to the fact that they were written primarily as short newspaper articles. The trail of Azorín may be traced in the Spanish press for the last twenty years, many of these fugitive pieces being full of restrained and exquisite

art. Thus we have the description of the Castilian peasant in *En la Meseta*, contributed to *La Vanguardia* (January 4, 1911) of Barcelona: "Todo el silencio, toda la rigidez, toda la adustez de esta inmóvil vida castellana está concentrada en los rebaños que cruzan la llanura lentamente y se reogen en los oteros y los valles de los montañas. Mirad ese rabadán, envuelto en su capa recia y parda, silencioso todo el día, todo el año, contemplando un cielo azul, sin nubes, ante el paisaje abrupto y grandioso de la montaña, y tendreis explicado el tipo del campesino castellano, castizo, histórico: noble, austero, grave y elegante en el ademán, corto, sentencioso y agudo en sus razones." In *Los Pueblos*, by suggestion, slight touches here and there, he conveys an intimate picture of Spain and the fascination, in its apparent dullness, of life in the provinces, owing partly to the fact that it has character without vulgarity.

Like his discreet *madrileño* Canduelo, his sketches "are essential and with exquisite art appear insignificant." One must not expect a full picture on paper. In the admirable sketch *Los Toros* one finds Don Tomás choosing his hat and coat and Juanita deciding whether to place her coronations on her breast or in her hair; we see the people running to shelter from a passing thunder-shower; but we never get as far as the bull-ring. So in *La Fiesta* we hear the merry ringing of bells in the distance, rockets ascend in the blue air, flowers are brought into the house to throw from the balcony when the procession passes; but the procession does not pass; the balconies are all flowers and gay dresses and expectant faces: "the procession is approaching." That is the secret of Azorín's art; he keeps in the margin, underlining here and there an apparently unessential detail. Working by suggestion, thin delicate outlines, recollections of old men or of

Azorín's boyhood, it displays at its best a supreme economy in drawing a picture which is nevertheless definite and effective. With his love of absolute clearness, he shuns all vague or blurred effects. He belongs to the East coast where the air is clear and thin and the distant mountains in their bareness are so distinct that they have an appearance of brittleness. When, in *España*, he writes a sketch entitled *En la Montaña*, it is not the deep-breasted Asturian country that he describes nor Pereda's Montaña nor the friendly, blunt mountains of the Basque provinces, with their woods and streams and pastures, nor the eternal snows of the Sierra Nevada, but those thin blue rocky outlines on the cloudless sky: "those delicate, graceful mountains of the East, covered only with brushwood; of clear radiant outlines, mountains which appear to be of porcelain and crystal." Solid enough withal, as is Azorín's art.

In *España (Hombres y Paisajes)* we go with him through the old cities, León, Córdoba, Seville, especially the old Castilian cities with their indigenous street names and silent cobbled streets: "En ellas hay un parador o mesón de las Animas y otro de las Angustias; hay calles estrechas en que los regatones y los talabarteros y los percoceros tienen sus tiendas; hay una fuente de piedra granulenta, grisácea, con las armas de un rey; hay canónigos que pasan bajo los soportales; hay un esquilón que en la hora muerta de la siesta toca cristalínamente y llama a la Catedral." Or it is a small city of the East coast beneath a sky perpetually blue. We make the acquaintance of the humble tillers of the soil who may be illiterate but can tell the names of all the birds and flowers. We have delicious sketches of the *anacalo* (the word is derived from the Arabic and has nothing to do with "call" or *καλεῖν*) who goes from door to door to fetch the bread for

the baker's oven; of the *apañador* who goes crying for sunshades and umbrellas to mend; of the *melcochero* with his *fayanco* of honey-cakes, calling "*melcochas finas, melcochas*" through the streets in the dusk of a rainy January day.

Azorín's sketches prove on every page that in order to extract the poetry of everyday life and of humble lives it is not necessary to be vague nor to treat them idyllically from a distance; the consummate artist may come to close quarters and extreme precision of detail. In *Castilla* he turns with great success to what will thenceforth be his chief business: the throwing into delicate relief of the scenes and persons of old Spanish books, some famous, others forgotten, adding a touch here and there to bring out the grain and colour, or a whole new chapter: to *Lazarillo de Tormes* in *Lo Fatal*, in which we hear further of the Toledo *escudero* who had disappeared so terribly (he goes out to change a gold coin which he did not possess and is heard of no more); and to *La Celestina* in *Las Nubes*, in which Calisto and Melibea, who ended so tragically in the last years of the Fifteenth Century, are represented as living, quietly middle-aged, in a *casa solariega* with their seventeen-year-old daughter: "En el jardín todo es silencio y paz. En lo alto de la solana, recostado sobre la barandilla, Calisto contempla extático a su hija. De pronto, un halcón aparece volando rápida y violentamente por entre los árboles. Tras él, persiguiéndole, todo agitado y descompuesto, surge un manecbo. Al llegar frente a Alisa, se detiene absorto, sonrío y comienza a hablarla. Calisto lo ve desde el caracol y adivina sus palabras. Unas nubes redondas, blancas, pasan lentamente sobre el ciclo azul, en la lejanía."

Delightfully, fascinatingly, Azorín thus extracts and criticizes and comments from various points of view, so as to

form a volume on the art of the world, in *El Político*, or describe a Castilian village, in *Un Pueblecito*, or analyse the scenery of Spain, in *El Paisaje de España visto por los Españoles*. In other volumes the literary criticism predominates, and naturally it reveals the critic as clearly as the criticized, sometimes more clearly. He has a dislike for the substantial and full-flavoured. His favourite artist is not Velazquez but the subtle El Greco. Of Menéndez y Pelayo he can declare that "one must say his style is oratorical, diffuse and redundant rather than analytical and precise; that he has shown no love for the new systems of æsthetics; that in a word his criticism is erudite and classificatory, not of internal interpretation and psychology."

On the other hand, Galdós, with his "books filled with small details," is in his eyes the greater artist, as he may be for those who deny that literature should be literary or in fact really exist. "Art," says Azorín, "is life; when the artist feels and expresses life, he reaches the deepest purity of style, however full it may be of barbarisms or incorrect expressions; then he becomes a great prose writer or a great poet, because he gives us the utmost that prose or verse can provide: that is, emotion" (*Clásicos y Modernos*). He is in search for the modern, and as he is apt to call all that is living modern, he finds it in the primitive and mediæval writers, in Berceo and the Archpriest of Hita and *La Celestina*. Only perhaps he is apt to forget that it is style, exquisite art, that has enshrined and preserved life there and that there is more life in the incidents of *Lazarillo de Tormes* which he condemns as improbable (*inverosímiles*) in *Los Valores Literarios* than in half a dozen novels of Pérez Galdós even, the reason being that they are not notes servilely copied from life but a concentration of reality.

The primitive poets, Berece, Ruiz, Manrique, Santillana, naturally attract this pre-Raphaelite, as does the perennial freshness of the un-gongorical Góngora, the naturalness of Don Quixote, the love of Nature in Fray Luis de Leon and Garcilasso. But the Eighteenth Century also has its charms, very potent charms; and for him Larra is the "most Castilian writer" of the Nineteenth Century. It is the Castilian genius which occupies most of his attention in *Lecturas Españolas*, and in one of its sketches, *El Caballero del Verde Gabán*, he emphasizes and develops an incident in *Don Quixote* with his usual insight and charm. Later he will profess keenest admiration for Pereda and *Peñas Arriba*. The same interest for all that is essentially Castilian appears in his earlier work, as in *El Alma Castellana*, in which Castilian life, literature and prose, mysticism, and the Inquisition, are studied. At that time Fray Luis de Granada was still too "oratorical," and Vicente Espinel "attains perfection in Castilian prose." Later, in *De Granada a Castelar*, he considers Fray Luis de Granada's *Retórica* "one of the most admirable books known to us." Impressionist criticism is liable to these contradictions, but not all critics have the courage to confess them as their taste broadens and matures.

A large space is given in this volume to Saavedra Fajardo, for whom Azorín had shown an affection in earlier books. But it is in considering his treatment of Fray Luis de Granada that we can best see how Azorín's spirit and criticism develop and change, becoming more catholic with the advancing years. Twenty or thirty years ago Granada's style was for him an example of inflated rhetorical Castilian prose, to be pilloried and derided; in *Los Dos Luises* it is "sober, clear and precise," an example to be admired and imitated. Nor is Azorín, for all his love of old books, dead to the life around

him, far otherwise; indeed he considered that Menéndez y Pelayo was too much in his library.

Some are of opinion that Azorín has written too much and that his later style has become empty and insipid. No one will deny that his work is unequal, but most critics will admit that he has shown a great power of development and improvement and that his style, far from becoming paralysed and dead, has grown into a perfect instrument for whatever he wishes to express. The pellucid flow of his prose may be white and shallow, but he always succeeds in colouring it with emotion, of places or persons, as one might throw a few drops of scent into a bath of transparent water. The result is not shallow, although it may be a test of the reader's culture. In *Don Juan* Azorín triumphantly demonstrated that his hand had lost none of its cunning. Its author was still under fifty and not yet an Academician; and the book gives us the right to expect more than one masterpiece from his pen during the next twenty years.

Don Juan tells of life in a small ancient Cathedral city. "Los siglos han ido formando un ambiente de señorío y de reposo. Sobre las cosas se percibe un matiz de eternidad. Los gëstos en las gentes son de un cansancio lento y grave. El blanco y el azul, en le zaguán de un pequeño convento humilde, nos dice por cima del arte, cternidad. El arte, que ha hecho espléndida la ciudad, ha realizado, andando los siglos, el milagro supremo de suprimirse él mismo y de dejar el ambiente maravilloso por él formado. Ese muro blanco y azul de un patizuelo, en una calle desierta, es la expresión más alta del ambiente creado." "Unos cipreses asoman entre tapiales: son los del huerto de las Jerónimas. A la derecha otra mancha verde marca el convento de las Capuchinas. Hay en la ciudad una cofradía del Cristo Sangriento.

THE ESSAY

De noche, en las callejuelas, por las plazuelas, unas voces largas cantan la hora, después de haber exclamado: Ave María Purísima. Brilla un farolito en un retablo." Here we see how skilful regard for the suggestive, significant, concrete detail can create an atmosphere and give a full essential picture. We see those narrow streets and hear the slow voice of the *sereno* along the massive stone houses beneath the stars. There is perhaps but an hour's reading in *Don Juan*, but the same art which in a few delicate lines re-creates the city, also gives intimate permanent impressions of its inhabitants, so that the bishop, the nuns, the judge, the doctor, the schoolmaster, the little old goldsmith who had been a Carlist officer, the colonel of the Civil Guard all live before us. The fortunate owners of *España* and *Castilla* in their original covers, *España* in its yellow and red, *Castilla* in its grey and black, may add to them this tiny volume, so crowded, yet so leisurely, and feel that they possess the essence of Azorín's art, although they will watch alertly for future volumes.

What is the essence of his art? Nothing and everything. "Nothing simpler, yet nothing more suggestive." "Nothing and yet so much. Nothing loud and exceptional, but so many shades and incidents reaching to spiritual depths" (*El Licenciado Vidriera*). His vocabulary deserves a special study. It is particularly rich in nouns, for he insists on giving each object its proper and expressive name, whether it be popular or archaic or both. Sometimes, as in *El Amigo del Campo*, we have a long catalogue of names of flowers and birds (*Clásicos y Modernos*); and all the fascinating Arabic words for agricultural and household implements abound in his pages.

In *El Parlamentarismo Español* and in *El Chirrión de los Políticos* Azorín describes Spanish political life before Sep-

tember, 1923, and in the latter, in *Don Pascual*, returns to his beloved figure of the disillusioned, gentle, tolerant philosopher. In *Don Juan* he finds time to return to the villages so suggestively described in former works, to a neighbouring village where the guest sleeps well in the bare room of a peasant's house: uneven beams of pine run along its ceiling, two roughly carved chests of oak stand against the walls, from which hang little scented bundles of rosemary, thyme, sage, lavender and wild marjoram.

The last pages of *Don Juan* are at once fascinating and significant: Brother John, they say you once lived in a palace. Is it true?—My palaces are the winds and the water, the mountains and the trees.—Brother John, how many servants had you?—My servants now are the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.—Brother John, your table was served with fare most exquisite.—My daily bread is now the kindly hearts of men.—Brother John, you have travelled in all parts of the world: you must have seen all the marvels?—The marvels I now see are the faith of simple souls and unfaltering hope.—Brother John, if I dare say it, I have heard that no woman could resist your love.—My love is now a higher love, a universal pity. (A white pigeon flies across the blue.) It is possible that the earlier Azorín might have denounced this as artificial. To the reader it is a present delight and the earnest of treasures to come.

§ 4. OTHER ESSAYISTS

The true heir of Gánivet in the essay may perhaps be said to be Don JOSÉ ORTEGA Y GASSET, a penetrating thinker with a careful style, who, although he has published very little, has exercised considerable influence on the younger

THE ESSAY

Spanish writers. His published works consist of a volume entitled *Personas, Obras, Cosas*, a volume of meditations on *Don Quixote*, and a short work, shorter even than Gani-vet's *Idearium Español*, on contemporary Spain, *España In-vertebrada: Bosquejo de algunos pensamientos históricos*, which he describes as an *ensayo de ensayo*. Other essayists, Don MANUEL BUENO, Don GABRIEL ALOMAR (the Mal-lorean poet), another Mallorcan writer, MIGUEL DE SAN-TOS OLIVER, have devoted themselves to journalism, and have published comparatively little in book form. This is notably the case with one of the ablest essayists of the last quarter of a century, Don RAMIRO DE MAEZTU. Re-cently Don LUIS DE ARAQUISTAIN has shown a tendency to turn from the political to the literary essay.

The Cuban EMILIO BOBADILLA (1868–1921), widely known under the pseudonym of Fray Candil, was an inde-pendent literary critic whose sincerity sometimes served to discover new points of observation, sometimes merely to be-tray the writer's limitations; he was also a novelist, but, above all, he published penetrating sketches of Paris, London (*La Ciudad sin vértebras*) and Spain (*Viajando por España*). Don ENRIQUE GÓMEZ CARRILLO, a most talented Guate-malan settled in Paris, shows himself a Spanish Pierre Loti in his impressions of Greece (*Grecia*) and of Egypt (*La Son-risa de la Esfinge*), of which he catches the abiding beauty and fascination. The Basque Don JOSÉ MARÍA SALA-VERRÍA, born in 1873, is pessimistic and sincere in *El Perro Negro* and in his direct impressions of Argentina and Cas-tile.

The true poet or philosopher may find sermons in stones: Don EUGENIO D'ORS goes a little further still and attempts to extract a transcendental philosophy out of every passing

fashion, slang phrase or cosmopolitan habit. If the thing can be done, the ingenious Xenius will do it, but it must be confessed that his *Glossaries* are a strange medley of incongruous effects. Nothing for him is irrelevant, and he pours every fugitive impression into his pages as the old woman shed the black beads of her rosary into the soup (readers of Quevedo will recall the passage: "she was blind and so fond of praying that one day her rosary broke and the beads fell into the cauldron and she brought us the holiest soup I have ever eaten"). It would be a miracle if a writer who, in the *Glosarí*, originally contributed by Xenius to the pages of *La Veu de Catalunya*, the *Nuevo Glosario* and other works, makes a point of setting the most contrary and jarring elements side by side and in ranging over all art and literature, the life and philosophy of every age and country, were not sometimes disconcerting and superficial; but we have often to thank him for subtle criticism and acute remarks. He considers that everything has been half said, and he continues to say it *a medias*. The mingling of ancient and modern, sacred and profane, fashions and art, the genius and the charlatan, the exotic and the indigenous, may seem to some readers a positive lack of taste; to others it forms the principal attraction of his work. "We admire Giotto as a primitive, Titian as a painter, Leonardo as an artist, Raffael as Raffael" (*El Nuevo Glosario: Europa*). Such ingenuities abound in his work and are lavished daily in the press and subsequently collected in volumes which combine entertainment with instruction.

The same love of the incongruous which marks the work of Xenius appears in the *Greguerías* of Don RAMÓN GÓMEZ DE LA SERNA, a collection of aphoristic sentences varying in length from four (*Irresistibles flecos de cristal*), seven

THE ESSAY

(*Se apagan las risas como las luces*) and ten words (*Son más largas las calles de noche que de día*) to little essays of two or three pages. The first *Greguerías* appeared in 1917, followed by *Greguerías Selectas* in 1919. The most recent of Spanish essayists is Don JOSÉ BERGAMÍN, who has printed a series of aphorisms in *El Cohete y la Estrella*, following the manner of Xenius and Señor Gómez de la Serna. Señor Bergamín shoots an arrow into the air, but the stars continue steadfast in their courses. Some of his sayings are ingenious, as: "Reality is to have an idea of things"; "Reasoning has nothing to do with the reasonable"; "True solidarity is only possible among the solitary." But the real essay must beware of refining itself away into such ingenuities, which can scarcely escape skirting the commonplace even when gazing at the stars, and will do well to temper itself in the broader equanimity and sound criticism of the author of *Letras e Ideas*.

V. CRITICISM AND SCHOLARSHIP

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§ I. MENÉNDEZ Y PELAYO

SPANISH scholarship towards the end of the Nineteenth Century stood in some need of renewal. The indefatigable zeal of PASCUAL DE CAYANGOS (1809-97), fruitful as it was in his researches, left something to be desired in the light of modern scholarship. The Padre FIDEL FITA (1838-1918) certainly was an accurate scholar, but devoted his scholarship mainly to the deciphering of inscriptions. Able critics such as Valera and *Clarín* and Emilia Pardo Bazán were occupied mainly with contemporary literature. Of controversial criticism, represented by such works as *Herejías* (1887), by Pompeyo Gener, there was always plenty; but a more austere and scholarly critic arose in the person of the Catalan MANUEL MILÁ y FONTANALS (1818-84), Professor of Literature in Barcelona University, with whom modern Spanish scholarship may really be said to begin. The analytical studies of this scholar and poet on the epic and on the popular poetry laid the foundations of a new school of criticism, and his lectures fired the enthusiasm of one of his pupils, who was destined to eclipse his fame.

The remarkable development of Spanish scholarship and bibliographical studies was due largely to the genius of one man, who in his brief life himself achieved the work of a whole generation. A fire from Heaven seemed to have descended into the veins of MARCELINO MENÉNDEZ Y PE-

LAYO, an Old Castilian born at Santander, who before he was fifteen was wrestling with ancient folios in the public libraries. Before he was twenty the marvellous boy was discussing triumphantly with the professors; at twenty he obtained one of the most important chairs in Spain, that of Spanish Literature at the University of Madrid, and at twenty-five was elected a member of the Spanish Academy. The precocious humanist was also a poet.

The fire of his enthusiasm, his living fervour for the humanities, always kept pace with his studious erudition; indeed, it was always overflowing, converting a note into an article, an introduction into a volume, and one volume into three. This might lead to a certain lack of proportion; but this defect is scarcely felt by the reader, who is carried along by the glowing ardour shown on every page until he takes whole pages of bibliography in his stride. Another twenty years of that precious life would have completed such colossal fragments as the edition of Lope de Vega, the *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas* and the *Bibliografía Latino-Clásica*, which now embraces only two and a half letters and runs to nearly a thousand pages. The introductions to his *Antología de Poetas Líricos Castellanos* and to the *Antología de Poetas Hispano-Americanos* devoured the text of these anthologies and are now read as separate treatises, as are the introductions to the *Orígenes de la Novela*.

A great humanist rather than a meticulous scholar, he seized the essential and ignored minute pedantries; for instance, he would often give the titles of foreign books in Spanish. He had found everything to be done, the flimsy foundations of bibliography giving way beneath his feet. To others this might have been a crushing obstacle; to him it proved an incentive: he toiled eagerly at bibliography and

built up his criticism on new foundations which he himself supplied. He could prove a fierce and formidable opponent, but his criticism was essentially constructive, based on an un-failing power of appreciation for all that was good in literature. It must always be borne in mind that his intellect continually ranged over the whole of Spanish literature and thought, with constant reference also to other literatures ancient and modern, so that it is never wise to neglect any part of his works or to pass over one of them because one may not be interested in its subject. In his early lectures on *Calderón y su Teatro*, for instance, what an admirable light is thrown on Tirso de Molina! In the introductions to the poets of Spanish South America one may learn much concerning the poets of the Peninsula. In the same way the fascinating *Horacio en España* is not only a delight to the classical scholar but is full of information as to Spanish and Portuguese poets.

Some of his most delightful work is contained in the *Antología de Poetas Líricos Castellanos*. In the first two volumes the introductions confine themselves modestly to some eighty pages; in the third, under the fascination first of the Galician-Portuguese *Cancioneiros*, then of the Archpriest of Hita, it gains in volume, to shrink again in the fourth with the *Cancionero de Baena*. In the fifth volume it broadens out again in a brilliant account of the brilliant literary period of Juan II, and after that it never looks back: the whole of the sixth volume is introduction (the Fifteenth Century); the seventh contains a series of enchanting studies on Enzina, Gil Vicente and various *Concioneros*; the next four deal with the *Romancero*, and the thirteenth and last is devoted to Boscán.

The five volumes of his *Estudios de Crítica Literaria* range from San Isidro to Núñez de Arce and even more recent writ-

ers, Milá y Fontanals, Pereda, Pérez Galdós, Don Francisco Rodríguez Marín. Written originally as academic discourses, introductions to books, or review articles, these masterly essays are various in treatment as well as in subject. From an artistic point of view they include some of Menéndez y Pelayo's best work, all his wealth of knowledge and ideas being here curbed by the limits of the space at his command, so that they are at once substantial and well-proportioned. If the studies on Torres Naharro and the Abate Marchena blossom out so as to fill a volume between them, there are others which in thirty, fifty or seventy pages give a full and finished survey of their subject. Such are the little masterpieces *De la poesía mística* in the first series, the study on *La Celestina* in the second, or the essay on *Esplendor y decadencia de la cultura científica española* in the fourth. But here, as always, one omits at one's peril; important sidelights occur on every page.

In the essay on Francisco Martínez de la Rosa, one comes across interesting criticism of Sophocles: "A los ojos de un griego Edipo merecía su suerte no ya por incestuoso y paricida, aunque involuntario, sino por liviano, petulante, atropellado, inicuo, confiado en demasía de la prosperidad y olvidadizo de los dioses: en suma porque no mandaba a sus pasiones, porque sus pasiones le mandaban a él. La pasión en el puro arte griego, en el de Esquilo y Sófocles, no es más que una ceguedad y espesa niebla, que aleja al espíritu de la templanza y atrae sobre la cabeza henchida de viento la ira de los dioses inmortales. Pero el drama no termina ni puede terminar aquí. Desde que Edipo deja vacías las sangrientas cuencas de sus ojos; desde que ha sido objeto especial y señaladísimo de las duras caricias de la fatalidad; desde que, apoyado en el brazo de Antígona, emprende su

peregrinación expiatoria, Edipo no es objeto de maldición, sino objeto sagrado, como la selva herida por el rayo. A los ojos de su alma se abre el porvenir, la resignación brilla en su frente, toda su naturaleza moral se ha ido depurando, elevando y transformando; es sacerdote y es profeta, por lo mismo que su infortunio ha sido superior al de todos los humanos; ciego, mendigo, desterrado, logra la alta serenidad que no logró cuando rey; y después de su muerte, todavía sus huesos derramarán bendiciones sobre la hospitalaria tierra del Ática, mientras florece el olivo de Minerva y canten las cigarras en los árboles de Colona.”

That is a good example of the restrained rhetoric—as it were the flowing precision, the concrete eloquence, of his style. It is often raised to a white heat, but one feels the hard iron still present in the glow; the vigour is never refined away into an insubstantial wraith of rhetorical emptiness. It is a style which penetrates and convinces, because it clings closely to the matter under immediate consideration and places its fervour and eloquence at the service of the subject treated without ever making eloquence an object in itself.

La Ciencia Española is not and did not pretend to be a systematic treatise on its subject, but this medley of “polemics, plans and bibliography” was nevertheless a prodigious achievement for so young a writer. If the fierceness of its personal attacks on the *krausistas* was the result of youth, the breadth and depth of its learning are characteristic of the mature Menéndez y Pelayo, the giant who read and wrote with the same splendid enthusiasm, sustained by a burning love for Spain and Roman Catholicism and interest in Spanish thought and art and in the Spanish Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century. In this early work on Spanish philosophical

thought (*ciencia*), Vives and Fox Morcillo, Gomez Pereira and Suarez and other Spanish thinkers and philosophers at length began to come into their own, and, while the extraordinary importance of the part played by Spain in the Renaissance was for the first time established, the virtues and advantages of Scholasticism were not overlooked. In its final form, *La Ciencia Española* appeared in three volumes; and the reader can supplement it with the three essays, on the Platonic philosophy in Spain, on the Spanish predecessors of Kant and on Fray Francisco de Vitoria, collected in *Ensayos de Crítica Filosófica*.

Nothing better shows the vast scale on which Menéndez y Pelayo worked than the fact that the introduction to his great treatise *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (undertaken when he was twenty) occupied in the second edition (1910) a large volume, dealing with prehistoric Spain. By virtue of their style, Menéndez y Pelayo's works of criticism are also works of art. Judged by its size and proportions, the *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España* is an ungainly fragment, a fragment of some four thousand pages; yet it contains treasures of art, and if the later volumes cannot recapture the interest of those dealing with the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, that is largely the fault of the subject.

The first volume (1883) goes down to the end of the Fifteenth Century. It begins by defining the æsthetic theories of Plato and Aristotle, Plotinus, Longinus, Cicero, Horace and the Christian philosophers. After this fascinating introduction, marked by that lucid and comprehensive manner which is the hallmark of the master, the first chapter deals with the Spanish Arabic and Spanish Jewish philosophers, the neo-Platonists, Lull, Sabunde, Ausías March. The volume ends with this considered judgment on Arabic archi-

ecture: "Execution wonderfully perfect, a great profusion of technical work, supplies in the buildings of the Arabs the touch of genius and imagination which they really lack. They invent nothing, neither the capital nor the horseshoe arch, nor even the elements of ornament; but in ornament they triumph and revel in its capricious and beautiful designs."

The second volume, divided into two parts (1884), is concerned with the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. It is the most Spanish part of the work; and it may be said in passing that those who would accuse the defender of the Inquisition of intolerance should first read his works, in which he lays special stress on the *harmonismo* and breadth of view of Spanish thinkers. He comments on the persecution of Francisco Sánchez as follows (pp. 277-8): "With Brocense one may say that all originality in these studies ended. Perhaps the very fervour, inherent in him, with which he opposed the cant philosophy reigning in the schools injured the noble cause he championed (the cause of Vives and independent thought) and brought upon his own head persecution and trouble, making his most harmless disquisitions, as were certainly those on Rhetoric and Grammar, an object of suspicion. Both the scholastics and the more conventional humanists resented being roused from their lazy slumbers by that hand of iron, and revenged themselves by denouncing him to the Inquisition and rendering him suspicious in the faith. Such were the ferocious and absurd reprisals to which hidebound official learning in the Sixteenth Century had recourse against the reformers, being unable to vanquish them on other ground, so that it armed an assassin's hand against Ramus and embittered by imprisonment the old age of El Brocense and the mature years of Luis de Leon."

Those who know how aggressive, persistent and gratuitous were the inroads of El Brocense into the field of theology might here be inclined to put the case for the Inquisition more strongly.

The subject of this volume was so immense that even Menéndez y Pelayo, who so often allowed his subject to expand in his hands, found it imperative to shorten sail. Luis de Leon, for instance, receives but two pages, and no notice is taken of the isolated æsthetic, one might almost say Hegelian ideas scattered through his Latin and Spanish works. Fuller treatment is accorded to Arias Montano and El Brocense, and a few Portuguese writers (Camões, Antonio Ferreira) are included. Two chapters, over three hundred pages, are given to the Spanish Sixteenth-Century theorists of architecture, sculpture, painting and music, among which Francisco de Salinas' *De Musica* (1577) naturally occupies a prominent place. In some measure one might say of this volume of Menéndez y Pelayo what in it he says of Luis de Leon's *De los Nombres de Cristo*: "Æstheticism is infused latently through the veins of the work, not only in the style, which, in my opinion excels that of any other Castilian book, but in the harmonious blending of the ideas, and the mysterious and serene brilliance of the thought, which sometimes presents the most finished model of intellectual beauty."

It might have been thought that the work was now drawing to a close and that another two volumes would bring the history of æsthetic ideas in Spain to the end of the Nineteenth Century; but the volume devoted to the Eighteenth Century exceeded in length its immediate predecessor, and an increasing tendency shows itself to go outside Spain and therefore outside the professed subject of the book. The accounts of Feijóo, Luzán, Quintana and Moratín are, however, full of

interest, while a complaint of the neglect of Spanish writers came with special force from a Spanish writer so extensively acquainted with the literatures of Europe: "A book written in Castilian scarcely seems to exist, as though it were written in the dialect of the Society Islands. Let us resign ourselves and write for ourselves alone; perhaps thereby we may retain a vestige of originality" (p. 184). Three more volumes on the Nineteenth Century failed to complete the work; in fact, like a great army once sent to conquer Spain, this *introducción larguísima* did not succeed in reaching the left bank of the Bidasoa.

The first volume is concerned mainly with the German theorists and philosophers; the essays on Kant and Hegel are excellent examples of Menéndez y Pelayo's clearness of thought and sympathetic penetration. It was this breadth of sympathy that attracted him to the philosophy of Hegel. "No writer on Æsthetics has possessed in so high a degree the most rare and precious gift of admiring everything, and understanding everything, and of communicating his admiration to others in a style worthy of the great, ideal works that he analyzes." His own analysis of Hegel's *Æsthetik* he characterizes as given "*en esqueleto, muy en esqueleto*"; but, however many volumes a full treatment of Hegel might require, Menéndez was certainly incapable of presenting his readers with a skeleton: his deep humanism, his enthusiasm for truth and beauty, clothed the bones with grace and charm, so that one might almost say that his most purely bibliographical pages resemble a skeleton as little as does a figure painted by the brush of Raffael.

The third volume dealing with the Nineteenth Century turns to England (Burns, Cowper, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Moore, Southey, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and on to Ruskin and

Matthew Arnold). Even Grant Allen is included, but an important omission is that of Walter Pater, whose whole work was implicitly a profession of æsthetic ideas; the omission was perhaps unavoidable, since Pater's reputation is largely posthumous. It must not be supposed that because these later volumes deal with foreign countries they are written at second hand. Menéndez y Pelayo read everything, and he has usually something important and original to say, which makes it impossible to ignore his work. Of Shelley he says: Shelley was not a Romantic but purely classical; not after the English fashion, as Byron wished to be, but in the Greek style; yet he did not share his friend's disdain for the very brilliant poetic movement of the first years of our century. These poets in his eyes were the high priests of an intuitive inspiration, mirrors of gigantic shadows thrown by the future on the present, and legislators unrecognized by the world."

The treatment of the Lake poets is somewhat perfunctory, and Keats, the greatest poetical genius produced in England since Milton, is classed among the *dii minores* and placed below Leopardi and Foscolo. His crime, in the eyes of so keen a classical scholar as Menéndez y Pelayo, was, no doubt, that he had no direct knowledge of Greek and was thus rather pseudo-classical than classical; nevertheless, even when he thus disparages Keats, Menéndez y Pelayo shows his vast superiority over the great mass of foreign critics by recognizing the extreme beauty of some of Keats' poems. More space is given in this volume to the French theorists, from Cousin to Taine, and the final volume continues in France and deals with the theories of the French Romantics in literature and art. Insufficient space is bestowed on Stendhal; on the other hand, the account of the heights and depths of Victor Hugo is marked by that native good sense with which Menén-

dez y Pelayo held his enthusiasm under control, even as his native good taste retrained his style.

In a few words prefixed to this last volume, he declared that he must reserve the French post-Romantics and a sketch of æsthetic ideas in Italy for a fourth introductory volume. Thus the whole work would have comprised about twelve volumes. He felt that he must defend the latter arrangement of his book: "perhaps when the work is finished and the connection between its various parts becomes more evident the interpolation of these four volumes will seem a less monstrous episode." He puts in the plea that the book has given more than it promised; and in fact the reader wishes nothing away and only laments that death prevented him from completing it, as it prevented him from developing his work on the Spanish humanists of the Sixteenth Century. Could the fourteen hundred pages, valuable in themselves, dealing with Germany, France and England in the Nineteenth Century, have been reduced by one-half and this half added to the section devoted to Sixteenth-Century Spain, this magnificent work would have been an even greater masterpiece than it now is.

As a good instance of the way in which sheer love of beauty lights up and transforms his great erudition, we may take his note on the decay of sculpture (except in wood), in Spain after the middle of the Sixteenth Century: "Several causes contributed to prevent the grand manner in sculpture of the two great disciples of Michael Angelo from bearing fruit; those two disciples so vigorously and aptly described by Juan de Arphe. After that first generous outburst of the Renaissance, when Berruguete modelled in wax the newly discovered Laocoon, celebrated in a beautiful hymn by Sadoletto, and Becerra, possessed with Cellini's enthusiasm for lovely

skeletons and splendid bones, magnificently drew the figures of the Valverde book of anatomy, sculpture, lacking in Spain the stimulus and native air of Italy, and confined more and more to the entrances of churches, sepulchral urns and choir-stalls, was doomed to perish beneath the decadence of the Plateresque style and the icy breath of Herrera's architecture. Only one kind of sculpture could henceforth flourish in Spain, sculpture in wood, of a realism so vigorous and popular that it cannot be understood or appreciated by those who were not born under Spanish skies and the influence of a race which has always placed the common reality of everyday above æsthetic idealism."

Menéndez y Pelayo was essentially a poet, a poet who wrestled with whole libraries. His poetry is not separated by any profound abyss from his prose. It is nobly expressed in the *Epistola a Horacio* and in other verses and translations of his *Estudios Poéticos*, published when he was twenty-two. In both his poetry and prose we have the same fervour, the same restrained and irrepressible flow of expression and purity of phrase. The poets translated in this volume include Sappho, Theocritus, Lucretius, Catullus, Horace, Byron, Filinto Elysio, Foscolo, and Chénier. It was because, with his orthodox Catholicism, he had so wide and tolerant, so generous, one might indeed say so characteristically Castilian an embrace, grouping, as it were, all the Greek and Latin poets round the Throne, that the genius of Menéndez y Pelayo takes rank with the great Spanish humanists of the Sixteenth Century.

§ 2. OTHER CRITICS AND HISTORIANS

For over a generation the figure of Menéndez y Pelayo dominated Spanish scholarship; he was, however, no upas-

tree but a stimulating presence, and, apart from the younger scholars who grew up under his influence, others of different tendency flourished during his reign. A far less literary figure was that of the Aragonese JOAQUÍN COSTA, whose modern but national spirit exercised a considerable influence over the thought of his contemporaries. His profound learning was devoted largely to social, political and legal themes and problems, especially to ancient Spanish law and local custom; but he also made a deep study of popular poetry, language and traditions. His clear, penetrating thought was expressed with force and sincerity in a long series of works, some of which will stand the test of time. Spain's modern historians have been inclined to dwell on the more recent history of their country. Passages in EMILIO CASTELAR'S published works seem to indicate that, had he been able to twist the neck of Rhetoric, he might have possessed a style of marvellous vigour and precision; but the orator stood implacably at his elbow, whether he was recording memories of travel in *Recuerdos de Italia* (1872) or sketching the history of Republicanism in *Historia del Movimiento Republicano en Europa* (1873-74) or describing *La Civilización en los cinco primeros siglos del Cristianismo*. As Ganivet remarked, "Castelar wishes to be an historian, and his studies change in his hands into chants half epic, half oratorical." His style is ruined by being perpetually on tiptoe for a rhetorical flight. The historical work of another celebrated statesman, ANTONIO CÁNOVAS DEL CASTILLO, is represented by able studies on the reign of Philip IV and the decadence of Spain, while he came nearer to his own time in *El Solitario y su tiempo* (1883).

MANUEL DANVILA Y COLLADO wrote the *Historia del reino de Carlos III* (1891-94); JOSÉ DE ARTECHE

completed his *Guerra de la Independencia* in thirteen volumes in 1902; ANTONIO PIRALA published his *Historia Contemporanea* in six volumes (1875-79) and the three volumes of the *Historia de la Guerra Civil* in 1887. The Marqués de VILLA-URRUTIA is the author, among many other historical works, of a very able and well-documented study entitled *Relaciones entre España e Inglaterra durante la Guerra de la Independencia*, the first volume of which appeared in 1911. Still more recent is the subject of a remarkable historical work by Don GABRIEL MAURA, Conde de la Mortera, *Historia Crítica del Reinado de Don Alfonso XIII durante la minoridad*, the first part of which was published in 1920. The Conde de la Mortera not only writes with impartiality and detachment but shows a sure grasp of his subject, ably treated in its many facets. Earlier he had written a history of *Carlos II y su Corte*. The CONDE DE CEDILLO has devoted a volume of much learning and generous enthusiasm to the regency of Fray Francisco Ximenes: *El Cardenal Cisneros Gobernador del Reino* (1921). Don JERÓNIMO BECKER has studied the diplomatic relations of Spain in a series of valuable monographs, and Don EDUARDO DE HINOJOSA has published important studies on legal aspects. The learned scholar AURELIANO FERNÁNDEZ GUERRA collaborated with Hinojosa in a history of the Visigothic Monarchy in Spain, and with P. Fidel Fita in *Recuerdos de un Viaje a Santiago de Compostela* (1880). The first volume of GUMERSINDO DE AZCÁRATE'S *Ensayo sobre la historia del derecho de propiedad* appeared in 1879, the third five years later; the year 1873 saw the publication of both MANUEL COLMEIRO'S *Curso de derecho político* and FRANCISCO DE CÁRDENAS' *Historia de la propiedad territorial*

CRITICISM AND SCHOLARSHIP

en España. CESÁREO FERNÁNDEZ DURO's great work on *La Armada Española* began to appear in 1895.

Among many other earlier works revealing research and scholarship, a high place must be accorded to the four volumes of *Conquenses Ilustres* (1868-75), by FERMÍN CABALLERO, and to the *Historia de las Universidades de España* (4 vols., 1884-89), by VICENTE DE LA FUENTE, author of *Historia Eclesiástica de España* (1863). Apart from special studies, the principal Spanish historian of the Twentieth Century is Don RAFAEL ALTAMIRA, whose *Historia de España y de la civilización española* in four volumes (1900-1911) bears witness to the scientific character of the age and gives less attention to external events than to the social, political and economic aspects. The third volume, for instance, the study of which is indispensable for a proper understanding of Spain's greatness and decay, gives 180 pages, a quarter of the whole, to the *historia política externa*, followed by 250 pages on social and political organization, including the various classes of society, the administration of the State, the relations between Church and State, and the religious question as a whole. A third section studies the economic life of the nation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (agriculture, commerce, population, finance); and a final hundred pages provide an amazingly rich summary of the education, literature, art, science, philosophy, music, customs, dress and morals of Spain's Golden Age. The history goes down to the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. Señor Altamira, a contributor to the *Cambridge Modern History*, combines comprehensive completeness with accuracy and minuteness of detail; his method is cold, impersonal and scientific, but, although he does not carry the reader away by the

force of enthusiasm, he convinces him by his clearness and sincerity. His keen intellect and bibliographical bent are shown in many other important works, including *Psicología del Pueblo Español* (1918) with its elaborate bibliography.

§ 3. RECENT CRITICISM

It might have been expected that, when there was a tendency to place all the literary canons in the melting pot, criticism would flourish by reason of this very tendency or in a reaction against it; but the first quarter of the Twentieth Century in Spain was less remarkable for a scientific impersonal criticism which might act as a corrective and incentive to contemporary writers than for the revival and growth of scholarship concerned with the great figures of Spain's past. Menéndez y Pelayo founded a school. His splendid name attracted scholars to the work of research and investigation and study of the classics and to what had hitherto been the somewhat despised field of bibliography. A group of brilliant young men grew up round him. Although they might not attain the broad scope and fervour of the master, some of them even surpassed him in exact scholarship.

Don RAMÓN MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, one of the leading European scholars of the day, has brought something more than a wealth of philological learning to his study of the *Crónica General*, the *Poema de mio Cid*, the legend of the Infantes de Lara, and generally to the whole subject of the mediæval literature and language and the early epics, lyrics and *romances*. For his work not only has a national, indigenous cast but is marked by keen insight and a very human element which carries the reader easily and eagerly through pages of intricate erudition. His clearness of

thought and scrupulous sincerity are emphasized by the corresponding clearness and vigour of his style. Whether he is with almost uncanny skill disentangling the sources and authorship of the *Crónica General de España* or unravelling the origins of the *Poema de mio Cid* or critically studying a newly discovered Spanish epic entitled *Roncesvalles* (1917), his work is always living; for although less literary and more scientific than Menéndez y Pelayo, he has inherited his faculty for making learning attractive and stimulating.

His *Estudios Literarios* contain an elaborate examination of the sources of that great play, *El Condenado por Desconfiado*, and a fascinating essay on *La primitiva poesía lírica española*, as to which he is "inclined to think that, generally speaking, the Castilian *cantares de amigo* are fairly independent of the Galician, and correspond less to the influence of the latter than to a common tradition spread in other parts of Spain as well as in Galicia." This contention would probably have been established beyond doubt had a Spanish Gil Vicente preserved something more than fragments of the Castilian *cantares*. The whole subject of the early literature of the Peninsula is treated ably and exhaustively from a different standpoint in his *Poesía Juglaresca y Juglares* (1924).

As editor since 1914 of the *Revista de Filología Española*, Señor Menéndez Pidal has drawn round him a group of exact scholars, some of whom are evidently destined to carry on worthily what has now become a tradition of exact and excellent Spanish scholarship. Of these younger scholars, Don Antonio Solalinde has made a name by his very able studies in Spanish mediæval literature; he edited *Calila y Dimna* in 1917 and Berceo's *Milagros* in 1922. Don Tomás Navarro Tomás and Don V. García de Diego pay especial

attention to philology, and Don J. G. Ocerín to bibliography. Other contributors to this excellent review are Don Américo de Castro, joint author with Hugo Rennert of a well-known life of Lope de Vega, and the Mexican Don Alfonso Reyes (born in 1889). Don Federico de Onís has published valuable studies on Luis de Leon and an edition of *De los Nombres de Cristo*.

An even younger disciple of Menéndez y Pelayo than Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Don ADOLFO BONILLA Y SAN MARTÍN, has taken the drier path of philosophy and law, developing the vistas opened up by the master in *La Ciencia Española* and other works. His biographical and bibliographical study of Vives, *Luis de Vives y la filosofía del Renacimiento* (1903), is a masterpiece (and, if one considers that its author was under thirty, almost a miracle) which no student of the Renaissance can afford to leave unread. Señor Bonilla y San Martín's profound learning, critical faculty and acute thought have at their command an amazing industry, and it is difficult to realize that this humanist of ever-growing reputation, author of countless volumes of solid erudition, is still under fifty. His *Historia de la Filosofía Española* in two volumes (1908, 1911) has not yet emerged from the Middle Ages and will gain in interest as it approaches the Sixteenth Century. His works on legal subjects are very numerous; more closely connected with literature are his *Anales de la Literatura Española* (1904), *Gonzalo de Córdoba* (1911), his work on the *Libros de Caballerías* and the study with which he completed the *Orígenes de la Novela* of Menéndez y Pelayo in a fourth volume; while his edition of Cervantes, in collaboration with Dr. Rudolph Schevill, places him among the leading Cervantists.

CRITICISM AND SCHOLARSHIP

Don FRANCISCO RODRÍGUEZ MARÍN, born a year before Menéndez y Pelayo, who in 1907 paid so eloquent a tribute to the "insinuating charm of his style and the rich and solid store of his learning," brought the enthusiasm of a poet, the charm and variety of Andalucía, to light up the thorny path of criticism and the dusty regions of research, in which he was to prove so unwearying and so successful. His five volumes of popular quatrains, his life of Barahona de Soto, his life of Pedro Espinosa, his standard edition of *Don Quixote* are but a small part of his tremendous output, in which living interest always joins hands with patient labour, so that we feel the presence of the poet as well as of the learned scholar. His lightness of touch and Andalusian wit give distinction to his works of literary criticism; his love of Andalucía, his love of life, attracted him, and with him countless readers, to the fascinating field of Andalusian and Spanish folk-lore and to that most living period of Spanish literature, the Sixteenth Century. Few by-ways of Sixteenth-Century Spain, and especially the Andalusian by-ways, have been left unexplored by his illuminating zeal. On the life of Gutierre de Cetina, Juan de Mal Lara, Nicolas Monardes, Argote de Molina, he has thrown abundant new light in his *Nuevos Datos para las biografías de cien escritores de los siglos xvi y xvii* and elsewhere. Had the Director of the Madrid National Library published no works of learned criticism and research, he would still be known as a poet of great distinction and occasionally of real inspiration, as seen in the sonnets and madrigals reprinted in *A la antigua española* (1924), and as a delightful raconteur. Nearly twenty years ago Menéndez y Pelayo declared that his work was so copious and varied as to require a whole volume of

criticism to itself; since then it has doubled in extent, without losing any of its suppleness and subtlety, its youthful spirit and many-sidedness.

Another learned disciple of Menéndez y Pelayo, who described her as having an *alma de temple de acero*, arose in the person of Doña BLANCA DE LOS RÍOS, whose indefatigable researches in the libraries of Spain have never had the power to throw dust and cobwebs over the results of those researches, as expressed with a flowing gift of style and historical imagination in *Del Siglo de Oro* and *Calderón y su obra*. Her favourite studies have centred round the great Spanish dramatists, and she has spent a lifetime accumulating material for a work on Tirso de Molina, a work which has become famous before being written, and is confidently expected to be the standard book on its fascinating subject. One of the foremost scholars of the day, who began writing forty years ago under the influence of Menéndez y Pelayo, is Don EMILIO COTARELO Y MORÍ. He has specialized on the drama, in the Eighteenth Century (the *sainetes* of Ramón de la Cruz), the Sixteenth (Juan de Encina and a valuable study of Lope de Rueda) and the Seventeenth (Tirso de Molina and Lope de Vega, and more recently an important study of Calderon, which will be completed in four parts). He brings to these studies not only a wealth of learning but an intimate knowledge of all that concerns the ancient stage, the production of plays, treatment of the texts, and the origin and development of the drama and of such special forms as the *auto sacramental* and the *zarzuela*. He has also published notes throwing light on the life of Cervantes.

A year or two before Señor Cotarelo y Mori, another patient investigator and most accomplished scholar, ANTONIO PAZ Y MÉLA, began to publish the fruits of his studies of

ancient Spanish texts and chronicles, which have resulted in many valuable editions in the *Colección de Bibliófilos Españoles* and elsewhere. CRISTÓBAL PÉREZ PASTOR devoted his life to searching the Spanish archives for documents concerning the great writers of the Golden Age. Thanks to his important discoveries, Lope de Vega, Calderon and especially Cervantes have appeared in a new light and all the previous biographies have become antiquated. His catalogues of the books printed at Madrid and Toledo are also invaluable. Many books, articles and editions, notably in the *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, testify to the variety and depth of learning and the excellent scholarship of Don MANUEL SERRANO Y SANZ (born in 1866). Some of the older scholars continued to publish valuable studies. Pascual de Gayangos, much of whose important work was done in the first half of the Nineteenth Century, survived until 1897. MANUEL CAÑETE's edition of the dramatist Lucas Fernandez had appeared in 1867; but MANUEL MILÁ Y FONTANALS published his study on *La poesía heroica y popular castellana* in 1874 and his *Romancerillo Catalán* appeared in 1882, two years before his death. JOSÉ AMADOR DE LOS RÍOS, the historian of Spanish literature, turned from literary studies to the history of the Jews in Spain, but his work was completed before the revolution of 1868, which he survived by ten years. The MARQUÉS DE VALMAR, Don Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto, was the author of the Academy's magnificent edition of the *Cantigas* of King Alfonso X, and five years later, in 1894, published his interesting *Historia de la Poesía Castellana en el siglo XVIII*.

The wide success of JAMES FITZMAURICE-KELLY's *Historia de la Literatura Española* in its successive Spanish editions, combining as it does brilliant criticism with a wealth

of bibliographical matter, proved an incentive to Spanish scholars in the Twentieth Century. The weight of bibliography needs, however, to be lightened by a personal touch which is absent from the *Historia de la Literatura Española* (1921-22) by Don JUAN HURTADO Y J. DE LA SERNA and Don ANGEL GONZÁLEZ PALENCIA, whose book is a useful and up-to-date reference manual, but who, for instance, omit to mention among their anthologies the *Oxford Book of Spanish Verse* because Fitzmaurice-Kelly omitted it. The *Historia de la Lengua y Literatura Castellana* in fourteen volumes (1915-22) bears witness to the wide learning and admirable energy of Don JULIO CEJADOR Y FRAUCA, author of a valuable *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana* and of many other essential works and editions. He especially emphasizes the Castilian and the popular elements in Spanish literature, and this is a most welcome feature in his work, although he perhaps carries it too far when he proclaims Gabriel y Galán to be more of a poet than Luis de Leon. His *Historia* is crammed with bibliographical information and contains much sound criticism, although on certain questions, literary and philological, as, for instance, the Basque origin of Castilian, one may not agree with the author. A fifteenth volume, containing a general index to page and volume, would render the work more useful to students.

The path of the literary historian is beset with thorns, and it is rendered more intricate, if more interesting, by the researches now being carried on with such zest and critical acuteness by many scholars in the Spanish archives and libraries. The distinguished Augustinian critic Fray FRANCISCO GARCÍA BLANCO, whose important work *La Literatura Española en el siglo XIX* appeared in 1892-94, had followers in Fray MARCELINO GUTIÉRREZ and Fray

CONRADO MUIÑOS SÁENZ, who studied with brilliant results the philosophy and life of Luis de Leon, to whom an even more capable Augustinian writer, Fray GREGORIO SANTIAGO VELA, combining accuracy with fecundity, devoted a lifetime. From the pages of the *Archivo Histórico Hispano-Agustiniano* he shed a flood of new light on his biography, which will for the first time receive adequate treatment in the same critic's magnificent *Ensayo de una Biblioteca Ibero-Americana de la Orden de San Agustín*, in publication since 1913, continued after his death by Fray PEDRO ABELLA. Yet another Augustinian scholar of wide celebrity, the learned librarian of the Escorial, Fray GUILERMO ANTOLÍN, although barely fifty, is the author of many invaluable works, chief among them being his *Catálogo de los Códices Latinos de la Real Biblioteca del Escorial* in four volumes (1910-16).

Among Dominican scholars who have devoted themselves to literary research, Fray ALONSO GETINO occupies a prominent place. The keen and skilful researches of Don NARCISO ALONSO CORTÉS (born in 1875) at Valladolid have borne fruit in a quarter of a century of works throwing welcome light on celebrated Spanish writers, from Lope de Rueda to Zorrilla, the third volume of whose biography appeared in 1920. Don ANDRÉS MARTÍNEZ SALAZAR has displayed much scholarly insight in his patient researches concerning the important early Galician literature. Don PEDRO URBANO GONZÁLEZ DE LA CALLE, whose able monograph on Fox Morcillo was published in 1903, has shown what Spanish archives are capable of yielding to skilful research work in his minute and remarkable study of the university life of El Brocense: *Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas* (1923).

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

The Arabic scholar Don JULIÁN RIBERA has paid special attention to the sources of early poetry in Spain and has made important contributions to the problem of the music of the *Cantigas* of Alfonso X. A younger Arabic scholar, Don MIGUEL ASÍN PALACIOS, crowned a long series of works with an illuminating study of the Arabic sources of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Music has an able critic in Don FELIPE PEDRELL and in Don RAFAEL MITJANA, architecture in VICENTE LAMPÉREZ (1861-1922), archæology in Don JOSÉ RAMÓN MÉLIDA, art in Don ELÍAS TORMO (born in 1869) and Don RAFAEL DOMENECH, while the works of Don MANUEL COSÍO on art (*El Greco*, 1908) and of Don SANTIAGO RAMÓN Y CAJAL on biology are of world-wide reputation. JUAN MENENDEZ PIDAL (1861-1915) was not only a poet, whose *Poesías* appeared in 1913, two years before his death, but had given especial attention to popular poetry (in *Poesía popular asturiana*, 1885) and wrote an excellent study of the epic poet Luis Zapata. Don JOAQUÍN HAZAÑAS Y LA RUA has edited the poems of Gutierre de Cetina and studied other Andalusian writers. Of the many valuable contributions to scholarship made by South America, such as the studies of Don Pedro Henríquez Ureña, whose *La Versificación Irregular en la Poesía Castellana* appeared in 1917, and Don Francisco Icaza, and of the well-known critic Don Leopoldo Lugones (born in 1869), this is not the place to speak. Greek scholars include Don JOSÉ ALEMANY, who published his *Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana* in 1918, Fray BONIFACIO HOMPANERA and Don CARLOS VIÑAS MEY.

In an age of fantastic literary theories, when century-long reputations are challenged and re-examined and young authors are at the mercy of every shrill wind that blows, two

CRITICISM AND SCHOLARSHIP

critics especially have brought good sense and clear-sightedness to bear on contemporary literature. Don EDUARDO GÓMEZ DE BAQUERO has preserved detachment and balance in his critical work, impersonal but not unsympathetic, in *Letras e Ideas, Novelas y Novelistas* and *El renacimiento de la novela en el siglo XIX*. More mordant a critic than *Andrenio*, Don JULIO CASARES, in *Crítica Profana* and the two volumes of *Crítica Efímera*, has vigorously dusted the coats of the modernists and with Castilian sureness of touch placed his finger on the flaws and foibles of contemporary prose. He continues the invaluable line of watchdogs of the Spanish language, represented earlier by the incisive wit of MARIANO DE CÁVIA (1855–1920) and the *Prontuario de Hispanismo y Barbarismo* (1908) of Padre JUAN MIR (1840–1917). The opposite pole to Señor Casares' restrained scholarship and golden good sense is presented by the confused and voluminous critical work of the talented young writer Don ANDRÉS GONZÁLEZ BLANCO (1886–1924), who was also a poet and a novelist, in *La Novela en España* (1909), *Los Contemporáneos* (4 vols., 1907–10) and *Dramaturgos Españoles Contemporáneos* (1917).

Wide learning and subtle penetration are displayed by the literary critic Don LUIS ARAUJO COSTA; the Sevillian writer Señor CANSINOS ASSENS has made a welcome contribution to contemporary criticism in *La Literatura Nueva* (2 vols., 1916, 1917); Don MANUEL BUENO has studied the drama in his *Teatro Español Contemporáneo* (1909), a subject to which Señor Pérez de Ayala contributed sincere and original pages in the two volumes of *Las Máscaras*. An early death cut short the promise of that acute critic, FRANCISCO NAVARRO LEDESMA, whose *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Miguel de Cervantes* appeared in 1905. The Venezuelan

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

Don RUFINO BLANCO-FOMBONA is a poet; as a critic he is impulsive, but his criticism is of more value when it deals with literary subjects than, for instance, in the historical theme of *El Conquistador Español en el Siglo XVI* (1921), many of the statements in which it might not be easy to substantiate. A subtle and stimulating critic, equally at home in the literatures of Spain and England, is Don SALVADOR MADARIAGA, whose English essay on Shelley and Calderon was translated into Spanish by its author in *Ensayos Anglo-Españoles* (1924).

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(This list is not complete. The student should always refer to Fitzmaurice-Kelly's *History of Spanish Literature* (Oxford, 1925) and *Spanish Bibliography* (Oxford, 1925). Sr. D. Julio Cejador's *Historia de la Lengua y Literatura Castellana* is a storehouse of more or less reliable bibliographical information.)

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 Insúa (Alberto) 1883-
 Don Quijote en los Alpes 1907
 La Hora Trágica 1908
 El Triunfo 1909
 Las Flechas del Amor 1912
 Los Hombres 1912, 13
 El Peligro 1915
 De un mundo a otro 1916
 Las Fronteras de la Pasión 1920
 La Batalla Sentimental 1921
 Felicidad 1924
 Jiménez (Juan Ramón) 1881-
 Arias Tristes 1903
 Jardines Lejanos 1904
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 Laberinto 1910
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Linares Rivas (Manuel) 1867-
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María Victoria 1904
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El Caballero Lobo 1910
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Cobardías 1918
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Poseída 1912
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 Alma 1902, 1907
 Ars Moriendi 1921
 Poesías 1924
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 La Tierra de Campos 1897, 98
- Marquina (Eduardo) 1879-
 Odas 1900
 Elegías 1905
 Las Hijas del Cid 1908
 Vendimión 1909
 Doña María la Brava 1909
 En Flandes se ha puesto el sol 1910
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 Alondra 1918
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 Libro de Sigüenza 1917
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 Ochoa (Juan) 1864-99
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 La Juerga 1900
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 España Invertebrada 1922
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 Palacio Valdés (Armando) 1853-
 El Señorito Octavio 1881
 Marta y María 1883
 Idilio de un Enfermo 1883
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 Prometeo 1916
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 Política y Toros 1918
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 Gloria 1876, 77
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CONTEMPORARY SPANISH LITERATURE

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 Poesías 1892
 Joyeles Bizantinos 1902
 Retratos Antiguos 1902
 Paisajes 1903
 Reliquias 1910
 Plus Ultra 1924

INDEX

- Abati (Joaquín), 159
 Abella (Fray Pedro), 285
 Acebal (Francisco), 105
 Æschylus, 163
 Aguilar Catena (Juan), 103
 Alarcón (Pedro Antonio de), 15, 18, 39, 49-52, 83, 103
 Alas (Leopoldo), *see* Clarín
 Aleover (Juan), 17, 195
 Alemany (José), 286
 Allen (Grant), 272
 Alomar (Gabriel), 257
 Altamira (Rafael), 26, 277-278
 Alvarez Quinteros, The, 27, 34, 176, 180-184
 Amador de los Ríos (José), 283
 Amiel, 100
 Antolín (Fray Guillermo), 285
 Araquistáin (Luis de), 257
 Araujo Costa (Luis), 287
 Arias Montano (Benito), 270
 Aristotle, 268
 Arniches (Carlos), 158-159
 Arnold (Matthew), 272
 Arcebe (José de), 275
 Asín Palacios (Miguel), 286
 Aza (Vital), 157
 Azeárate (Gumersindo de), 276
 Azorín, 15, 22, 23, 27, 28, 33, 86, 140, 144, 199, 235, 244-256

 Balart (Federico), 198
 Balzac (Honoré de), 41, 45, 49, 55, 63, 64
 Barbey d'Aureville, 127
 Baroja (Pío), 15, 19, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 34, 105, 107-121, 156, 199, 232, 245
 Barrie (Sir James), 177
 Bartrina (Joaquín María), 198
 Baudelaire (Charles), 31, 202, 216
 Becker (Jerónimo), 276
 Becquer (Gustavo Adolfo), 20, 193-194, 195, 199, 202, 203, 216, 218, 219

 Beethoven, 137
 Bellini, 48
 Benavente (Jacinto), 15, 21, 27, 30, 34, 160-173, 177, 181, 235
 Benlliure (Mariano de), 235
 Berceo (Gonzalo de), 24, 25, 223, 252, 253
 Bergamín (José), 27, 259
 Björnson, 177
 Blanco Fombona (Rufino), 287-288
 Blaseo (Eusebio), 103-104
 Blaseo Ibáñez (Vicente), 17, 29, 30, 34, 62, 85, 90-96, 103
 Blas y Ubide (Juan), 104
 Bobadilla (Emilio), 257
 Boeaccio (Giovanni), 136
 Bonilla y San Martín (Adolfo), 105, 280
 Borrow (George), 41
 Boscán (Juan), 265
 Breton (Tomás), 158
 Breton de los Herreros, 89, 151
 Brieux, 177
 Browning (Robert), 198
 Bueno (Manuel), 257, 287
 Burgos (Javier de), 157
 Burns (Robert), 271
 Byron, Lord, 18, 25, 51, 115, 161, 197, 272, 274

 Caballero (Fermín), 277
 Calderon, 29, 77, 161, 171, 189, 282, 283, 288
 Camba (Francisco), 90
 Camões (Luis de), 207, 270
 Campoamor (Ramón de), 20, 24, 195-196, 198
 Cañete (Manuel), 283
 Cano (Leopoldo), 154
 Cánovas del Castillo (Antonio), 275
 Cansinos Assens, 283
 Capus (Alfred), 161
 Cardeñas (Francisco de), 276
 Carducci (Giosuè), 238
 Carlyle (Thomas), 242

INDEX

- Carré Aldao (Eugenio), 17
 Casañal (Alberto), 104
 Casanova, 124
 Casares (Julio), 102, 124, 287
 Castelar (Emilio), 20, 27, 122, 197, 275
 Castello Branco (Camillo), 56
 Castro (Eugenio de), 203
 Castro (Rosalia de), 17, 20, 25, 193, 194-195, 199, 202, 216, 219
 Catullus, 200, 274
 Caveda, 17
 Cavia (Mariano de), 287
 Cedillo, Conde de, 276
 Cejador (Julio), 284
Celestina, La, 155, 165, 251, 252, 266
 Cervantes (Miguel de), 29, 40, 42, 43, 161, 175, 240, 245, 253, 280, 282, 283
 Chamizo (Luis), 17
 Chapí (Ruperto), 158
 Chénier (André), 216, 274
 Chopin, 210, 217
 Chueca (Federico), 158
 Cicero, 59, 268
 Ciges Aparicio, 101
Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), 42, 75-80, 103, 104, 231, 244, 263
 Coleridge (Samuel Taylor), 271
 Colmeiro (Manuel), 276
 Coloma (Luis), 80-81
 Coronado (Carolina), 39
 Cortés (Hernán), 62
 Cortés (Narciso Alonso), 285
 Cosío (Manuel), 286
 Costa (Joaquín), 275
 Costa y Llobera (Miguel), 17, 195
 Cotarelo y Mori (Emilio), 105, 282
 Cousin (Victor), 272
 Cowper (William), 271
 Cruz (Ramón de la), 157
 Curros Enríquez (Manuel), 17
 D'Annunzio (Gabriele), 97, 127, 161, 203
 Dante, 117, 286
 Dánvila (Alfonso), 105
 Dánvila y Collado (Manuel), 275
 Darío (Rubén), 6, 17, 31, 86, 126, 199-202, 204, 208, 216, 219
 Darwin (George), 197
 Daudet (Alphonse), 63, 161
 Delgado (Sinesio), 198
 Deus Ramos (João de), 207
 Dicenta (Joaquín), 20, 154, 156, 160
 Dickens (Charles), 17, 54, 119, 162
 Díez Canedo (Enrique), 195
 Domenech (Rafael), 286
 Donnay (Maurice), 161
 Dostoievsky, 119
 Dumas (Alexandre), 39, 49, 154, 161, 177
 Eça de Queiroz, 90, 127, 184
 Echegaray (José), 17, 19, 20, 23, 151, 152-154, 160, 189
 Echegaray (Miguel), 158
 Enzina (Juan del), 265
 Erckmann-Chatrian, 56
 Escalante (Amos de), 105
 Espina (Concha), 145-148
 Espinel (Vicente), 253
 Espronceda, 200
 Feijóo (Benito Geronimo), 270
 Fernán Caballero, 39, 64
 Fernandez (Lucas), 283
 Fernandez Ardevin (Luis), 226
 Fernandez Caballero (Manuel), 158
 Fernandez Florez (Wenceslao), 89
 Fernandez Guerra (Aureliano), 276
 Fernandez Shaw (Carlos), 158
 Ferrari (Emilio), 198
 Ferrreira (Antonio), 270
 Filinto Elysio, 274
 Fita (Fidel), 263, 276
 Fitzmaurice-Kelly (James), 283-284
 Flaubert (Gustave), 64, 75, 77, 116
 Foscolo (Ugo), 272, 274
 Fox Morcillo, 268, 285
 France (Anatole), 29, 33, 59, 116, 161
 Francés (José), 101
 Fuente (Vicente de la), 277
 Gabriel y Galán (José María de), 17, 195, 224-226, 284
 Galvez (Manuel), 25, 30
 Ganivet (Angel), 231-233, 243, 256, 275
 García Alvarez (Enrique), 159
 García Blanco (Fray Francisco), 284
 García de Diego (V.), 279
 García Gutierrez (Antonio), 39, 151
 Gayangos (Pascual de), 263, 283
 Gener (Pompeyo), 263
 Getino (Fray Alonso), 285
 Gil (Enrique), 105
 Giner de los Ríos (Francisco), 31
 Goldoni, 177
 Gomez Baquero (Eduardo), 259, 287
 Gomez Carrillo (Enrique), 207
 Gomez de Avellanada (Gertrudis), 39

INDEX

- Gomez de la Serna (Ramón), 27, 258-259
 Gomez Pereira, 268
 Concourts, The, 63, 64, 67
 Góngora (Luis de), 24, 216, 253
 González (Melitón), 158
 González Anaya (Salvador), 101
 González Blanco (Andrés), 287
 González de la Calle (Pedro Urbano), 285
 González Palencia (Angel), 284
 Gorki (Maxim), 108, 119
 Goy de Silva (Ramón), 22, 188
 Goya, 117, 148
 Gracian, 161
 Granada (Fray Luis de), 253
 Granés (Salvador María), 158
 Grau Delgado (Jacinto), 188
 Greco, El, 22, 23, 24, 25, 35, 67, 117, 121, 200, 226, 252, 286
 Guerra Junquero (Abilio), 217
 Guimerá (Angel), 22
 Gutierrez (Fray Marcelino), 284
 Gutierrez Nájera (Manuel), 202
 Hartzbusch (Juan Eugenio), 39, 151
 Hazañas y la Rua (Joaquín), 286
 Hazlitt (William), 239
 Hegel, 270, 271
 Heine, 193, 203, 208, 216
 Henriquez Ureña (Pedro), 286
 Herculano (Alexandre), 198
 Hérédia (José María de), 220
 Hinojosa (Eduardo), 276
 Hita, Archpriest of. *see* Ruiz
 Hompanera (Fray Bonifacio), 286
 Horace, 194, 268, 274
 Hoyos y Vincent (Antonio), 102-103
 Hugo (Victor), 32, 39, 49, 90, 129, 272
 Hurtado y J. de la Serna (Juan), 284
 Ibsen, 154, 161, 177
 Icaza (Francisco), 286
 Insua (Alberto), 99-101
 Isidro, San, 265
 Jackson Veyan (José), 159
 Jiménez (J. R.), 15, 28, 32, 33, 208-218
 Kant, 268, 271
 Karr (Alphonse), 49
 Keats (John), 272
 Kipling (Rudyard), 98, 161
 Kock (Paul de), 39
 Lampérez (Vicente), 286
 Landor (Walter Savage), 48
 Larra (Mariano José de), 24, 253
 Larreta (Enrique (Rodríguez)), 30, 105-107
 Lasso de la Vega (García), 253
Lazarillo de Tormes, 40, 157, 251, 252
 Leconte de Lisle, 32
 Lejarraga (María), 176, 177
 Leon (Luis de), 16, 26, 29, 67, 117, 174, 203, 253, 269, 270, 280
 León (Ricardo), 15, 23, 120-126
 Linares Rivas (Manuel), 21, 178-179
 Llorente (Teodoro), 17, 194-195
 Longinus, 268
 Lopez Alarcón (Enrique), 208
 Lopez de Haro (Rafael), 101
 Lopez Pinillos (José), 156
 Lopez Roberts (Mauricio), 102
 Lopez Silva (José), 158
 Loti (Pierre), 42, 161, 257
 Loyola, San Ignacio de, 240
 Lozoya, Marqués de, 226
 Lucan, 198
 Luceño (Tomás), 157
 Lucio (Celso), 159
 Lucretius, 274
 Lugones (Leopoldo), 17, 286
 Lull (Ramón), 268
 Luzán (Ignacio de), 270
 Machado (Antonio), 23, 27, 33, 207, 220-223, 224
 Machado (Manuel), 207-208
 Machado y Alvarez (Antonio), 221
 Macías, 186
 Macías Picavea (Ricardo), 189
 Madariaga (Salvador), 288
 Maeterlinck (Maurice), 127, 161, 277
 Macztu (Ramiro de), 23, 257
 Mallarmé (Stéphane), 203
 Manrique (Gomez), 207, 253
 Maragall (Juan), 17
 March (Ausias), 268
 Marchena (José), 266
 Marquina (Eduardo), 15, 22, 184, 185, 217-219
 Martínez de la Rosa (Francisco), 266
 Martínez Olmedilla (Augusto), 102
 Martínez Ruiz (José), *see* Azorín
 Martínez Salazar (Andrés), 285
 Martínez Sierra (Gregorio), 15, 21, 33, 163, 171-178, 183, 207, 214
 Mas (José), 90
 Mata (Pedro), 101
 Matheu (J. M. de), 54, 82, 85-89

INDEX

- Maura (Antonio), 21, 124
 Maura (Gabriel), 276
 Medina (Vicente), 17, 195
 Mérida (José Ramón), 286
 Melville (Herman), 232
 Menéndez Pidal (Juan), 286
 Menéndez Pidal (Ramón), 278-279
 Menéndez y Pelayo (Enrique), 104
 Menéndez y Pelayo (Marcelino), 20,
 23, 29, 31, 33, 35, 121, 231, 245, 252,
 254, 263-275, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282
 Meredith (George), 31
 Mérimée (Prosper), 36
 Mesa (Enrique de), 223-224
 Mesonero Romanos, 40
 Milá y Fontanals (Manuel), 263, 266,
 283
 Milton (John), 117, 272
 Mir (Juan), 287
 Miró (Gabriel), 15, 140-145
 Mitjana (Rafael), 286
 Molière, 161
 Moore (George), 136
 Moore (Thomas), 271
 Moratín, 270
 Muiños Sáenz (Fray Conrado), 285

 Navarro Ledesma (Francisco), 287
 Navarro Tomás (Tomás), 279
 Nervo (Amado), 204
 Nietzsche, 119, 161, 234
 Núñez de Arce, 19, 195-198, 265

 Ocerín (J. G.), 280
 Ochoa (Juan), 104
 Onís (Federico de), 280
 Ors (Eugenio d'), 27, 30, 257-259
 Ortega y Gasset (José), 26, 256-257

 Palacio (Manuel del), 198
 Palacio Valdés (Armando), 15, 69-75,
 104, 146, 167
 Pardo Bazán (Emilia), 15, 19, 28, 42,
 61-69, 89, 90, 103, 263
 Parellada (Pablo), *see* González
 (Melitón)
 Paso (Antonio), 159
 Pater (Walter), 31, 272
 Paz y Mélia (Antonio), 282-283
 Pedrell (Felipe), 286
 Pereda (José María de), 16, 19, 28,
 30, 39-44, 49, 52, 60, 62, 64, 65, 70,
 71, 73, 74, 116, 117, 145, 146, 253,
 266
 Pereda (Vicente de), 104
 Perés (Ramón Domingo), 205

 Pérez de Ayala (Ramón), 15, 32, 34,
 35, 105, 124, 125, 131, 135-140, 174,
 205-206, 233, 287
 Pérez Galdós (Benito), 15, 18, 21, 22,
 23, 24, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 40, 41, 44,
 52-61, 62, 90, 105, 113, 114, 119,
 122, 127, 152, 154, 160, 162, 181,
 245, 252, 266
 Pérez Lugín (Alejandro), 90
 Pérez Pastor (Cristóbal), 283
 Pérez y González (Felipe), 157
 Picón (Jacinto Octavio), 15, 81-85
 Piralá (Antonio), 276
 Plato, 18, 268
 Plotinus, 268
 Poe (Edgar Allan), 119, 208
Poema de mio Cid, 14, 278
 Pondal (Eduardo), 17, 222
 Puyol (José), 105

 Quental (Antero de), 238
 Querol (Vicente Wenceslao), 20, 25,
 193, 194, 199, 203
 Quintana, 194, 270

 Racine, 162
 Raffael, 271
 Raimbaud, 32
 Ramírez Angel (Emiliano), 102, 226
 Ramón y Cajal (Santiago), 286
 Ramos Carrión (Miguel), 257
 Ramus, 269
 Reina (Manuel), 198
 Rembrandt, 40
 Rennert (H. A.), 280
 Répide (Pedro de), 102
 Rey Soto (Antonio), 187
 Reyca (Alfonso), 220
 Reyes (Arturo), 104
 Reyes Huertas (Antonio), 104
 Ribera (Julián), 285
 Ríos (Blanca de los), 282
 Ríos y Ríos (Angel), 43
 Rivas, Duque de, 39
 Rodó (José Enrique), 17
 Rodríguez de la Cámara (Juan), 186
 Rodríguez Larreta, *see* Larreta
 Rodríguez Marín (Francisco), 266,
 281, 282
 Rodríguez Rubí (Tomás), 151
 Ronsard (Pierre), 223
 Rossetti (Dante Gabriel), 161
 Rostand (Édouard), 175, 209
 Rubens, 67
 Rueda (Salvador), 217, 219-220
 Ruiz (Juan), Archpriest of Hita, 2
 252, 253, 265

INDEX

- Rusiñol (Santiago), 17, 177
 Ruskin (John), 31, 116, 271
- Saavedra Fajardo, 253
 Sabunde, 268
 Salaverría (Juan María de), 257
 Salillas (Rafael), 102
 Salinas (Francisco de), 270
 Samain (Albert), 212
 Sanchez (Francisco), 268, 270, 285
 Sand (George), 39, 49
 Sandoval (Manuel de), 226
 Santiago Vela (Fray Gregorio de), 285
 Santillana, Marqués de, 24, 253
 Santos Chocano (José), 17, 204
 Sappho, 274
 Sanz del Río, 75
 Sehevell (Rudolf), 280
 Schiller, 219
 Schubert, 199
 Scott (Sir Walter), 18, 49, 53, 271
 Sellés (Eugenio), 232
 Serrano (José), 158
 Serrano y Sanz (Manuel), 283
 Shakespeare (William), 62, 153, 161, 168, 171, 177
 Shelley (Percy Bysshe), 161, 197, 271, 272, 288
 Sigüenza (Fray José de), 245
 Silva (J. A.), 17, 202-203
 Solá (Jaime), 89
 Solalinde (Antonio), 279
 Solitario, El, 40
 Sophocles, 171, 266
 Soulié, 39
 Southey (Robert), 60, 199, 271
 Stendhal (Henri Beyle), 64, 77, 86, 98, 119, 272
 Sterne (Laurence), 136
 Stevenson (Robert Louis), 60, 130, 165
 Suarez (Francisco), 268
 Sue (Eugène), 39
 Swinburne (Algernon Charles), 97
- Tagore (Sir Rabindranath), 62
 Taine (Hippolyte), 272
 Tamayo y Baus, 39, 151
 Tapia (Luis de), 193
 Tennyson (Alfred), 161, 197
 Theocritus, 274
 Theocopuli (Domenico), *see* Greco, El
 Tiepolo, 73
 Tirso de Molina, 29, 189, 265, 282
 Tolstoi (Count Leo), 40, 161
 Tormo (Elías), 286
 Torres Naharro (Bartolomé de), 266
 Trigo (Felipe), 96-99, 101, 102
 Turgenev, 119
- Unamuno (Miguel de), 15, 23, 27, 28, 139, 153, 163, 199, 233-244, 245
 Underhill (John Garrett), 169
 Urquijo (Julio de), 17
- Valencia (Guillermo), 203-204
 Valera (Juan), 17, 30, 39, 44-48, 67, 82, 83, 85, 97, 103, 140, 231, 263
 Valera (Luis), 104
 Valle-Inclán (Ramón del), 15, 22, 24, 27, 28, 89, 126-135, 141, 144, 185-187, 206-207
 Valmar, Marqués de, 286
 Valverde (Joaquín), 158
 Vega (Lope de), 26, 29, 33, 189, 200, 264, 280, 283
 Vega (Ricardo de la), 157
 Ventura de la Vega, 39, 151
 Velazquez, 23, 117, 140
 Verdaguer (Jacinto), 17
 Verlaine, 24, 32, 202, 203, 208, 216
 Vicente (Gil), 265
 Villaespesa (Francisco de), 185, 220
 Villasinda, Marqués de, *see* Valera (Luis)
 Villa-Urrutia, Marqués de, 276
 Viñas Mey (Carlos), 286
 Vives (Amadeo), 158
 Vives (Juan Luis), 29, 268, 269, 280
 Voltaire, 65
- Walton (Izaak), 242
 Watteau, 215
 Wells (H. G.), 30
 Wordsworth (William), 238
- Xenius, *see* Ors (Eugenio d')
- Zayas (Antonio de), 220
 Zola (Émile), 63, 64, 65, 75, 90, 91
 Zorrilla (José), 20, 39, 151, 285
 Zuloaga (Ignacio de), 23, 24, 117
 Zurbarán, 23

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